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WORK WHILE YE HAVE THE LIGHT

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN OF

COUNT LYOF TOLSTOI

BY

E. J. DILLON, PH.D.

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INTRODUCTION.

A NUMBER of guests were once gathered under the hospitable roof of a rich man, and it came to pass one day that their conversation took a serious turn, the theme being human life.

They discussed persons who were present and persons who were absent, but they were unable to find among all their acquaintances one single man who was satisfied with his life. Not that any one of them had reason to grumble at fortune; but not one of them could pretend to look upon the life he was leading as one worthy of a Christian. They all admitted that they were squandering away their existence in a worldly manner, caring only for themselves

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and their families, taking no thought of their neighbor and still less of God.

Such was the gist of their remarks and they were singularly unanimous in finding themselves guilty of leading godless, unchristian lives.

"Why, then, go on living in this miserable way?" exclaimed a youth who had taken part in the discussion. "Why continue to do what we ourselves condemn? Are we not masters of our own lives, free to modify and change them at our will? About one thing we are all perfectly clear: our luxury, our effeminacy, our riches; but more than all else our overweening pride, and our consequent isolation from our brethren, are hurrying us on to irreparable ruin. In order that we may become distinguished and wealthy we are forced to deprive ourselves of all that which constitutes the joy of human life: we live huddled together in cities, we grow lax and enervated, undermine our health, and in spite of all our amusements die of *ennui* and of regret that our life is so far removed from what it should

be. Now, why should we live so, why thus ruthlessly blast our whole life — wantonly trample upon a priceless boon conferred upon us by God? I, for one, will no longer debase myself by living as heretofore. My unfinished course of studies I will cast to the winds, for they can lead me to nought else but that bitterly painful existence of which you are all now complaining. I will renounce my estates and retire to the country where I will spend all my time with the poor. I will work in their midst, will inure myself to such manual labor as they perform, and should my intellectual culture be needful to them, I will impart it, not through the medium of establishments and books but directly, living and working among them as among brothers. Yes," he concluded, casting an interrogative glance at his father who stood there listening to his words, "I have taken my decision."

"Your desire is noble at bottom," said his father, "but it is the unripe fruit of an undeveloped brain. To you everything appears thus feasible because you have not yet tasted

life. What would become of us and the world at large if we were to pursue everything that seemed good and desirable! The realization of all these desirable things is generally very difficult and complicated. It is no easy matter to make headway even along a smooth and well-beaten track, but how hard must it not be when we have to set to work to make new roads of our own! Such a task is only for those members of the community who have grown perfectly mature and have assimilated the highest and best that is accessible to man. To you the ordering of life upon wholly new lines seems but child's play, because life to you is still a sealed book. This is the outcome of the thoughtlessness and pride of youth. Hence it is that we sedate people, older in years and wiser in knowledge, are indispensable in order to moderate your fiery outbursts and give you the benefit of our experience, while it is your duty to submit to us and be guided by our riper wisdom. Yours will be a life of activity in future years; at present you are in a period of growth and development. Wait till your

education is completed, finish your studies, develop your faculties to their fullest capacity, stand on your own legs, form your own convictions and then adopt the new life you have been sketching for us, if you feel that you possess the needful strength. For the present you are only expected to obey those who are guiding you for your own good and you are not called upon to remodel human life upon a new basis."

The young man remained silent and his elders agreed that his father's advice was sound.

"You are perfectly right," cried a middle-aged married man, addressing his remarks to the last speaker. "No doubt our young friend here, utterly devoid as he is of experience, may easily go astray in his gropings after new ways in the labyrinth of life; nor can his resolve be seriously regarded as steadfast. At the same time, however, we are all agreed that the lives we are leading run counter to the promptings of our consciences and are productive of no good results to ourselves. Hence we cannot

but look with favor on the desire to effect a thorough change in our manner of living. Our young friend may, likely enough, mistake his own fancy for a logical conclusion worked out by his reason, but I am no longer a young man and I will tell you what I think and feel on the subject.

"Following attentively the discussion that has been going on here this evening, the self-same thought that occurred to him suggested itself to me. Personally I have not the shadow of a doubt that the life I am leading cannot possibly confer upon me happiness or peace of conscience. Reason and experience alike urge this truth upon me. What, then, am I waiting for? From morning to night I toil and moil for my family with the result that both they and myself, far from living up to the law of God, are sinking deeper day by day in the slough of sin. You work hard for your family, but in the long run your family is not a whit the better for your labor, because your efforts are not a real benefit to it. Hence I often ask myself whether it would not be much better if

I were to change my life completely and realize the ideas which our young friend has so clearly set before us, taking no thought of my wife or children but caring only for the soul. It is not without reason that Paul says: 'He that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. . . He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord.'"

Almost before the speaker could recite this short text to the end, all the women present, his own wife among the number, indignantly protested.

"You should have thought of this long before," exclaimed an elderly lady who had been attentively listening. "You have made your bed and must lie on it now. It would be a truly pretty state of things, in which every one who found it difficult to maintain his wife and family might shirk his duty by merely signifying a wish to save his soul. This is but fraud and baseness. A man ought to be able to lead a good, upright life in the

bosom of his family; to save ourselves alone needs no great art; nay, more, it is even contrary to Christ's teaching. God commands us to love others, and here are you wanting to injure others for God's sake! The truth is that a married man has certain well-defined duties and obligations and he should not neglect them. It is quite a different matter when the family is already cared for, brought up, and all its members put standing on their own legs. Then you may do as you like for yourself. But surely no one has a right to break up his family."

To this the married man did not assent. "It is not my purpose," he replied, "to abandon my family. I merely contend that it is my duty to bring up my family, my children, in an unworldly manner, not accustoming them to live for their own pleasures, but, as was suggested a few moments ago, inuring them to want, to work, teaching them to give a helping hand to their fellows and above all to treat all men as brothers. And to this end it is indispensable to renounce distinction and riches."

"It is quite absurd for you to go talking about breaking in others to the new life while you yourself are further from it than any of us," exclaimed his wife with much warmth. "You have always lived in the lap of luxury from your childhood upwards and why should you now wish to torture your wife and children? Let them grow up in peace and quiet and then leave them to undertake for themselves whatever line of life commends itself to them; but don't you go compelling them to embrace this way of living or that."

To this the married man made no reply, but an aged man sitting near him delivered himself as follows: "It is quite true, no doubt, that a married man who has accustomed his wife and children to ease and comfort should not deprive them of it all of a sudden. There is also great force in the argument that once the education of the children has been begun on certain lines, it is much better to continue and complete it, than to break it off to commence something else; especially as the children themselves, when grown up, will not fail to

choose the way that is best for them. I am therefore of opinion that it is difficult — nay, and sinful, too — for a married man to change his life. It is quite a different matter with us old men, whom God himself, so to say, has commanded to do so. I may, perhaps, be allowed to speak for myself: I live practically without any duties or obligations whatever; I live, if the truth must be told, solely for my belly. I eat, drink, rest myself, and am myself disgusted and sick of it all. Now, for me, it is surely high time to abandon this wretched life, to distribute my earthly goods and to live, now, at least, on the eve of my death, as God ordained that Christians should live."

But even the old man found no support. His niece was present, and his godchild, all of whose children he had held at the baptismal font and gratified with presents on holidays ever since, and also his own son. They one and all objected.

"No, no," said his son. "You have worked quite hard enough in your time and it is meet that you should now rest and not kill yourself

outright. You have lived for sixty years with your tastes and habits and it is not at this time of day that you can think of giving them up. The outcome of any such attempt on your part would be that you would subject yourself to great torture with no result whatever."

"Quite so," chimed in his niece; "and when you are in want, you know, you will be out of sorts and always grumbling and consequently will be sinning more grievously than ever before. Besides, God is merciful and pardons all sinners, not to speak of such a dear, good uncle as yourself."

"Yes, and why should we stir in this matter at all?" asked another old man of the same age as the uncle. "You and I have perhaps two days more to live. Why fritter them away in making plans and projects?"

"How extraordinary!" cried one of the guests. (He had uttered no word during the entire discussion.) "How incomprehensible! We are all agreed that we should live in accordance with God's law and that we are actually living badly, sinfully, and are suffer-

ing in body and in soul in consequence, and yet no sooner is it a question of putting our conclusions in practice than we discover that children should be exempted — they, forsooth, are not to be disciplined in the new life, but educated on the old lines. Then young men should not go against the will of their parents, and so instead of embracing the new ideas should make the best of the old. Married men, again, have no right to discipline their wives and children and inure them to the new way of living — and so they, too, should live the sinful life of the past. As for old men, it is too late for them to begin ; they are not accustomed to the hardships of the new life, and, besides, they have only two or three days left to live.

"It appears, therefore, that no one should lead a good, upright, spiritual life, — the utmost people may do is to discourse about it."

WORK WHILE YE HAVE THE LIGHT.

CHAPTER I.

IT happened in the reign of the Roman Emperor Trajan, one hundred years after the birth of Christ. The disciples of Christ's disciples were still in the flesh and the Christians of that day held fast to the law of the Master, as the author of the Acts of the Apostles tells us: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon

them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

In those early years of Christianity there lived in the province of Cilicia in the town of Tarsus a wealthy Syrian merchant named Juvenal, who dealt in precious stones. By birth he belonged to the poorest and lowest class of the community, but by dint of hard work and by the skill he acquired in his calling he accumulated considerable riches and won the respect of his fellow citizens. He had travelled much in various lands, and, although he possessed no claims to be regarded as learned or educated, he had seen and assimilated much, and his fellow burghers held him in high esteem for his sound intellect and keen sense of justice. He professed the faith of Pagan Rome, the religion to which all respectable citizens of the Roman Empire belonged;

its forms and ceremonies began to be strictly enforced in the reign of the Emperor Augustus and were still rigidly observed by the Emperor Trajan. The province of Cilicia is at a considerable distance from Rome; but it was ruled by a Roman governor and the effects of every wave of progress and retrogression that passed over Rome were distinctly felt in Cilicia, whose governors were ever eager to imitate their emperor.

Juvenal had a vivid recollection of the stories he had heard, when a lad, of Nero's life and death; it was within his own memory how emperor after emperor had come to an untimely end; and, like a shrewd observer, he perceived that there was nothing sacred either in the imperial power or in the Roman religion,—that both were the work of human hands. This same native shrewdness of his served likewise to bring home to his mind the futility of rising up against the imperial authority, and the necessity, for his own peace and happiness, of submitting to the established order of things. Yet, for all this, he was often bewildered by

the wild disorder of the life around him, especially in Rome itself, whither his affairs frequently took him. And at such times he was seized with disquieting doubts; but he regained his wonted composure by reflecting that his mind was too circumscribed to take in every point of view, too undisciplined to draw the right conclusions from such facts as he observed. He was married and had had four children, three of whom died young. His surviving son was named Julius.

In Julius was centred all his love; he was the object of all his tender care. It was his special endeavor so to educate and train up this boy as to spare him in after life the excruciating pains which he himself experienced from his frequent doubts and perplexities about the problem of life.

When Julius attained his fifteenth year his father confided him to the care of a philosopher who had come to live in the town for the purpose of taking in young men and educating them. Into the charge of this teacher he gave his son and his son's young comrade Pam-

philius, the son of a freedman of his who had died some time previously. The boys were of the same age, both of them handsome, manly young fellows, and good friends to boot.

They applied themselves vigorously to their studies and made rapid progress. They were also both of them well conducted. Julius evinced a marked predilection for letters and mathematics, while Pamphilius' taste led him to pursue the study of philosophy.

A year before the completion of the prescribed course of studies, Pamphilius came into school one day and informed the master that his widowed mother intended to leave the city for good and settle with a few friends in the little town of Daphne, that it would be his duty to accompany her and make himself useful to her, and that he must, in consequence, withdraw from the school and bring his studies thus abruptly to an end.

The master was sorry to lose a pupil who reflected such credit on his teacher, Juvenal likewise regretted the departure of his son's

bosom friend, but no one felt his loss so keenly as Julius. Pamphilius, however, remained deaf to all their entreaties that he should spend another year at school and finish his education. Thanking his friends for the many proofs they had given him of their affection, he bade them good-by and departed.

Two years whirled past. Julius had completed his course of studies without having once seen his friend. One day he was agreeably surprised to meet him on the street; he asked him to his father's house, where he examined and cross-examined him as to where and how he had lived since they parted. Pamphilius told him that he was still living with his mother in the same place.

"We are not living alone," he added. "We have many friends with us, with whom we enjoy everything in common."

"How do you mean in common?" asked Julius.

"So that none of us looks upon anything as his own property."

"Why do you do that, may I ask?"

"Because we are Christians," answered Pamphilius.

"Is it possible!" cried Julius.

Now to be a Christian in those days meant about the same thing as being a conspirator in these. The moment a person was convicted of belonging to the Christian sect he was arrested, tried, and, if he refused to abjure his faith, put to death. It was the consciousness of all this that terrified Julius when he learned that his comrade had embraced the new faith. He had heard unutterable horrors attributed to the Christians.

"I am told that Christians butcher little children and eat them. Can it be that you, too, take part in these atrocities?"

"Come and see for yourself," replied Pamphilius. "We do nothing out of the common; we live in a simple way, striving to do nothing bad."

"But how, pray, is it possible to get along without looking upon anything as your own property?"

"We support ourselves. And if we labor

in the service of our brethren, they in turn share with us the fruits of their toil."

"Well, but how if your brethren take your services and give you nothing in return?" insisted Julius.

"We have no such persons among us," replied Pamphilius. "People of that bent have a taste for living luxuriously, and it is not in our community that they will come to seek the realization of their desires; our living is simple, not luxurious nor even comfortable."

"Yes; but there exists a goodly number of lazy, idle people who ask nothing better than to be kept and fed for nothing."

"There certainly are such persons, and we receive them and give them a hearty welcome. We lately had a man of that description — a runaway slave. At first he led a lazy, good-for-nothing life; but he soon turned over a new leaf and is now an exemplary brother."

"Well, but what if he had not reformed?"

"There are some of that category, also; our elder, Cyril, says that it is especially incumbent upon us to treat such people as dearly beloved

brethren and to let slip no opportunity of showing them our love."

"But is it possible to love rascals?"

"It is wrong not to love your fellow-men."

"Tell me, now, how you can bring yourselves to give every one whatever it pleases him to ask of you?" inquired Julius. "I know," he added, "that if my father were to give every one what he wants and asks for, in a very short space of time he would be as poor as when he came into the world."

"I cannot say," Pamphilius made answer; "but somehow we always have enough to satisfy our needs. And if it should come to pass that we have nothing to eat or to cover our bodies with, we ask what we lack of others and they do not withhold it. That happens but very rarely, however. For my part, I have only once had to lie down at night without having had my supper, and even then it was chiefly because I was fairly tired out that evening and did not feel disposed to go off to one of the brethren and ask him for a meal."

"Well, of course, I don't pretend to know

how you manage these things," observed Julius; "but my father maintains that if he did not look carefully after his own, and if he were to give to all who came begging, he would very soon be eaten out of house and home and left to die of hunger.'

"We don't die of hunger. But you had better come and see for yourself. Not only are we alive, and not in want, but we have even a superfluity."

"How do you explain it?"

"In this way. We all profess one and the same law, but the degree of strength we possess to observe it varies greatly; one man being endowed with a much greater degree of it than another. Thus one person may have already attained to perfection in the good life, while another may be still struggling with the difficulties that are met with at the outset. High above us all, Christ stands clearly out with His life, and it is our constant endeavor to imitate Him. In this we place our happiness. Some members of our community, like the elder Cyril, for instance, and the woman Pelagea, are farther

advanced than any of us; others stand close behind them, others again are still further behind — but we are all of us moving forward in the same direction, on the same road.

"The pioneers are already near the law of Christ — abrogation of self — having lost their souls in order to find them. Men of this type want nothing. They feel no pity for themselves, and to fulfil Christ's law they would gladly give the last loaf, the last garment to him who asks for it. There are others — weaker souls, who cannot as yet give up everything. They grow faint and take pity upon themselves. They lose their strength without their usual food or clothing and so they cannot yet bring themselves to give away everything demanded of them.

"There are others still weaker than these — persons who have only recently entered upon the right road. They still go on living as before; hoarding up many things for their own use and giving alms only of their superfluity. Now these soldiers of the rear guard afford

material help and support to those who are in the front ranks.

"Moreover it should not be lost sight of that we are all entangled in the web of kinship with Pagans. One brother has a father still living who is an idolater; he owns an estate and he gives an allowance to his son. The son distributes it in alms, and the father in due time forwards more. Another has a Pagan mother who commiserates her son and sends him help. In another case it is the children who are heathens while the mother is a Christian. The children, anxious to insure their mother's comfort, give her what they can afford, entreating her not to distribute it to others. She accepts it out of love for them, but forthwith gives it away. In other cases the wife is a Pagan and the husband a Christian, or else the reverse.

"Thus it is that we are all inextricably entangled. Those in front would be happy to give away the last crust of bread, the last rag of clothing, but they cannot, for what seems the last is always succeeded by another. It is in this wise that the weak are always being

strengthened in the faith, and the same state of things explains why it is that we are never without the superfluous."

To which Julius made answer as follows: "If that be so, it is obvious that you swerve considerably from the teaching of Christ, and put seeming in the place of being. If you do not give away everything, there is no difference whatever between you and us. To my thinking, if you once set up to be a Christian, you should go about it in a thorough fashion and fulfil every iota of the law, distributing everything in alms and remaining a beggar."

"Truly, that would be best of all," assented Pamphilius; "why do you not do so?"

"I will, when you Christians set me the example."

"Oh, we have no wish to do anything for the sake of show. Nor should I advise you to come over to us, and leave your own surroundings, merely for the sake of effect. Whatever we do is undertaken in virtue of our faith."

"What do you mean by the expression, 'in virtue of our faith?'"

"I mean that we hold that escape from the evils of the world, from death, is to be found only in life as Christ understood it. As to what people will say of us, it does not matter at all. We live as we do, not in order to please people, but because we see therein the only means of obtaining life and happiness."

"It is impossible not to live for oneself," objected Julius. "The gods have made it part of our nature that we should love ourselves more dearly than all others, and should seek our own enjoyment. And this is precisely what you Christians also do. You have admitted, yourself, that the pity which many of your brethren feel is for themselves. They will go on gradually seeking more and more keenly their own pleasures and in a corresponding degree throwing aside the teachings of your faith, and in this they will be doing just as we do."

"No; not so," replied Pamphilius. "Our brethren are travelling on a different road, and they never grow fainter and weaker, but continually stronger, just as fire never goes out

as long as fuel is continued to be heaped upon it. Such is the force of faith."

"Still I fail to see in what this faith consists?"

"Our faith consists in this, that we understand life as Christ interpreted it for us."

"And that is ——?"

"Christ once related the following parable: Certain husbandmen cultivated a vineyard planted by a householder, for which they were bound to give him of the fruit. We who live in the world are these husbandmen, and we are bound to pay tribute to God, to fulfil His will. But the people who lived and believed with the world imagined that the vineyard was theirs; that they had nothing to pay for it, but might enjoy the fruits it brought forth, without more ado. And the lord of the vineyard sent a servant to collect the tribute, but they drove him away. He then despatched his son, but they killed him, thinking that after this no one would ever again interfere with them. Now, this is the world's faith, by which all worldlings regulate their lives, ignoring the fact that life is given to be spent in God. Christ taught us

that the faith of the world — namely, that it will be better for a man if he drives the lord's servant and his son out of his garden and refuses to pay tribute — is false, because every man must either pay tribute or be ejected from the vineyard. He taught us that the things which we term pleasures — eating, drinking, amusements and the rest — are not and cannot be pleasures, if we make them our aim in life; that they become joys only when we place our happiness in something different: namely, the fulfilment of God's will. Then, and only then, are these pleasures experienced, as something added to, and contingent upon, the performance of God's behests. To wish to enjoy the pleasures without being at the trouble of doing God's will — to pluck out the flowers, as it were, from among the thorns of labor—is as wise as it would be to gather stalks and plant them without the roots. This is our faith, and it is in virtue of it that we refuse to go in search of an illusion instead of the truth. We know that the happiness of life is not bound up with its pleasures, but lies in the fulfilment of the will of God

without our entertaining a thought or a hope of any pleasure. And we live thus, in consequence; and the longer we live, the more clearly we perceive that enjoyment and bliss follow close upon the performance of God's will, as the wheels of the cart follow the shaft. Our Master said: 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' "

Thus spoke Pamphilius. Julius listened with rapt attention and his heart was touched by what he heard; but still he was not quite clear as to the significance of all that Pamphilius had been saying. One moment he suspected his friend of attempting to deceive him; an instant later, as he gazed steadily into his mild, truthful eyes, he persuaded himself that Pamphilius was deceiving himself.

Pamphilius invited his friend to pay him a visit, during which he might study the life of their community for himself, and, should it please him, to take up his abode with them for the rest of his days. And Julius promised that he would.

He promised, but he did not visit Pamphil-

ius; and, carried away by the whirl of the life of a large city, he soon forgot all about him. He seemed to have an instinctive fear that the life of the Christians might prove too attractive for him to withstand. He therefore pictured it to himself as an existence in which one had to renounce all the bright sides of life. And he could not prevail upon himself to give them up, because in them he centred the aim and object of his life. He blamed and condemned the Christians, and he set great store by this condemnation; he was apprehensive lest he might some time or other cease to condemn them, and for this reason he availed himself of every opportunity that offered, to seek for the seamy side of Christianity. Whenever and wherever he came in contact with Christians in the city, he invariably discovered some pretext in their conduct for censuring them. When he saw them in the market-place selling fruit and vegetables, he would say to himself and sometimes to them: "You profess to own nothing and yet here you are selling products for money, instead of giving

them away for nothing to whoever wants to take them. You are deluding yourselves and deceiving others." And he refused to listen to their arguments by which they sought to convince him that it was necessary and just that they should sell their products in the market and not give them away. Whenever he saw a Christian wearing a good, well-made article of clothing, he never failed to reproach him with inconsistency for not having given it away. It was indispensable to his peace of mind that Christians should be wrong, and, as they never denied that they were in fault, they were always guilty in his eyes. He looked upon them as Pharisees, deceivers, whose force lay in their high-flown phrases, and their weakness in action. And of himself he remarked, by way of contrast: "I, at least, profess what I practise, whereas you say one thing and do another." And having persuaded himself that this was really so, he felt quite reassured, and continued to live as before.

CHAPTER II.

By nature Julius was gifted with a mild, amiable disposition; but like most young men of his time and country he was the owner of slaves whom he often punished in a barbarous manner, either when they neglected to carry out his commands or simply when he himself was out of sorts. He was the possessor of a collection of precious, useless curios and rich costumes to which he was continually making new additions. He was also fond of theatres and spectacles, and from his youth upwards provided himself with mistresses; and he often abandoned himself, in the society of his friends, to gross excesses in eating and drinking. In a word, his life glided onwards smoothly and gayly — as it seemed to him; for he could not

himself survey its course. It was made up almost exclusively of amusements, and the number of them was so great that he lacked even the time to give the matter a thought.

Two years passed rapidly away in this seemingly delightful manner; and Julius took it for granted that all the years of life must naturally roll by as pleasantly as these two. But in the nature of things this is an utter impossibility; for in a life like that which Julius was leading it is indispensable to go on continually increasing and intensifying the amusements in order to maintain the pleasure undiminished. If, in the beginning, he enjoyed quaffing a goblet of mellow wine in the company of a friend, the pleasure cloyed after several repetitions, and he soon found it necessary to drink two or three such goblets of still better wine, in order to obtain the same amount of enjoyment. If at first it was pleasant to while away an hour or two in converse with a friend, the pleasure soon wore off, and in order to spend that time with an equal degree of satisfaction it soon became

needful to substitute a female for a male friend; and later on even this failed of its effect and something else was required. In time this new arrangement likewise proved a failure: the same friends, even though they be female friends, become tiresome in the end and have to be changed. And so with all his pastimes and amusements: in order to make them yield the same amount of pleasure it became necessary to increase and intensify them, to make greater demands on the coöperation of others; and for people who do not happen to be rulers there was and is but one way of making other people comply with one's wishes — namely, by means of money. It was so with Julius. He gave himself up to pleasures of the body, and, not being a ruler, could not command others to be subservient to his desires, so that to purchase their coöperation and increase his pleasures he needed money.

Now Julius's father was a rich man, and as he loved and was proud of his only son he opened wide his purse to gratify his every whim, stinting him in nothing. Julius's life, there-

fore, was that of rich young men all the world over, — one of idleness, luxury and immoral amusements which have always been and will ever remain the same: wine, gambling and light, venal woman.

But his pleasures continued to absorb ever-increasing sums of money, and his sources of income frequently ran dry. One day he asked his father for a larger sum than usual. His father granted his request but reprimanded him for his prodigality. Julius knew in his heart that he was guilty and that the reproaches were well merited; but he could not bear to admit his guilt, and so he lost his temper and was insolent to his father, as is usually the way with persons who know themselves to be in fault but are unwilling to confess it. He received the sum he asked for and speedily squandered it. What was still worse, he and a drunken comrade picked a quarrel with some man and killed him. The city prefect, informed of what had taken place, had Julius taken into custody; but his father, after considerable exertions, succeeded in ob-

taining his pardon. During all this time, the demands on Julius's purse, in consequence of the troubles into which his pleasures plunged him, became greater and more frequent. He borrowed a large sum of a comrade, promising soon to refund it. Moreover his mistress selected this time of all others to demand more presents : she had taken a fancy to a necklace of pearls, and he could see that if he did not humor her caprice in the matter she would shake him off and give him a successor in the person of a wealthy man who had made repeated attempts to supplant Julius. In his straits Julius went to his mother, told her that, come what would, he must have the money, and that if she could not raise the sum needed he would put an end to his existence.

The circumstance that he had drifted into this embarrassing situation he ascribed wholly to his father ; to himself he took no share of the blame. "My father," he argued, "first accustomed me to a life of luxury, and now he turns round and grudges me the funds necessary to maintain it. If, in the beginning,

he had given me, without any reproaches, the sums he gave later on, I should have been able to arrange my life very comfortably, steering clear of impecuniosity and want. But, as he always insisted on doling out his money in mites, I never possessed enough for my needs and had to have dealings with usurers, who suck me as a spider sucks a fly; and now that I lack the wherewithal to keep up the kind of life to which I am accustomed, and which alone beseems young men of my station, I am ashamed to meet my friends and companions, and my father obstinately refuses to put himself in my position and realize my difficulties. He forgets that he, too, was once young. Why, it is actually he whom I have to blame for everything I am now enduring; and if he does not give me the sum I have asked for I will kill myself. That's just the long and the short of it."

His mother, who had always spoiled her son, straightway went to her husband. He sent for his son and bitterly reproached both him and his mother. Julius made insolent replies. His

father struck him. He seized his father by the hand. His father shouted for the slaves and ordered them to bind his son and lock him up.

In the solitude of his room Julius cursed his father and his life. His own or his father's death suggested itself to his mind as the only issue out of his present desperate condition.

Julius's mother suffered infinitely more than her son. She did not pause to inquire who was really to blame in all this. She was possessed by one sole sentiment — compassion for her unhappy child. She again sought out her husband and implored him to forgive the boy. Instead of listening to what she had to urge, he reviled her and accused her of having demoralized her son. She hurled back his reproaches, and the scene ended by her husband beating her. Undaunted by what had come of her intercession with her husband, she yielded again to her maternal instinct, which prompted her to hurry off to her son and beg him to ask his father's forgiveness. In return for this sacrifice on his part she promised to supply him

with the sum of money he required, unknown to his father. He assented, and she then went to her husband and implored him to forgive his son. At first he loaded mother and son with reproaches, but at last he agreed to pardon his son on one condition — that he would abandon forever his dissolute life and marry the daughter of a certain wealthy merchant, whose consent he undertook to obtain.

"He will receive money from me as well as a dowry from his bride," he added, "and then let him begin to lead a new, regular life. If he promises to do my will in this matter, I forgive him. At present I will give him nothing, and on his first offence I will hand him over to the city authorities."

Julius accepted the terms proposed by his father and was set at liberty. He promised to marry as directed, and to live a reformed life, but he had not the slightest intention of doing either. His life at home had become a hell to him. His father never spoke to him, and was perpetually upbraiding his mother on his account. His mother was continually in tears.

The day following his release his mother sent for him and secretly handed him over the promised jewels which she had abstracted from her husband. "Here they are," she said; "take them away and sell them, but not here. Dispose of them in some other city and do with the proceeds what you say is necessary. I think I can answer for their disappearance remaining undiscovered for some days at least. But if it should leak out, I will put the blame on one of the slaves."

Julius's heart was greatly troubled by these words of his mother. He was horrified at what she had done for him, and without taking or touching the precious stones he left the house. Why and whither was he going? He knew not. He went on and on, beyond the city boundaries, feeling the absolute necessity of being alone and of meditating on all that had happened to him and on what still awaited him. Leaving the city behind him, he entered a shady grove sacred to the Goddess Diana. Making for a solitary spot there, he gave himself up to meditation. His first

impulse was to pray to the goddess and ask her for help. But he no longer believed in the gods of the empire, and knew that prayers to them would prove unavailing and that succor from that quarter was an impossibility. But if they could not comfort and assist him, who could? It appeared strange and preposterous for him to be compelled to do his own thinking in this matter. Disorder and darkness reigned in his heart. And yet there was no other alternative. There was nothing for it but to appeal to his own conscience, and in the lurid light it shed he began to scrutinize the main actions of his life. He discovered that they were bad, and what he had never before suspected — foolish. What made him torment himself so? What impelled him to waste all the young years of his life so wantonly? The thoughts that these questions suggested had little to console him and much to make him miserable. What enhanced his suffering more than all else was the feeling of utter loneliness that oppressed him. Hitherto he had had a loving mother, a father to look

to; he was not without a certain number of friends. But now he was quite alone in the universe. No longer loved by any one, he was a burden to all. He had crossed every one's path in life: had caused his mother to quarrel with his father, and had scattered to the winds the riches that his father had spent the labor of a lifetime in slowly accumulating; he had become a disagreeable and dangerous rival to his friends. Was it so strange, then, if they all longed for his death, as he supposed they did?

Prominent among the figures that rose up before his mind's eye during this roll-call of past years was Pamphilius, cordially welcoming him to the Christian community and bidding him leave everything and cast in his lot with them. And the impulse to do so grew strong upon him. "But is my position, then, so utterly hopeless?" he asked himself; and as he again conjured up the events of recent years, his heart sank within him at the thought that no one loved him more. Father, mother, friends could not possibly cherish any affection

for him ; indeed, they could not do otherwise than desire his death. But did he himself love any one? He felt that he was attached to none of his friends. They were all of them his rivals and had not a throb of pity for him now that his misfortunes were thick upon him. And his father? he asked himself. And looking into his heart, to find the answer there, was appalled at what he saw. Not only did he not love his father, but he actually hated him for the restrictions, the insults, he had put upon him. Yes, hate was the word ; he hated him ; and, more than that, he perceived clearly that to his own happiness his father's death was absolutely indispensable.

"Yes, this is so. And suppose I knew that no one would ever see or hear of it, how would I act, if I had it in my power to take his life at a single blow and free myself from his tyranny?" And Julius distinctly replied to himself, "I would kill him," and he was horrified that it was so. "And my mother?" he asked. "Yes, I pity but do not love her. I do not care a straw what becomes of her; all I do

want is her help . . . Why, I am a wild beast! A wild beast at bay, hounded down; and the sole difference between myself and the beast is that I can, if I so will it, leave this deceitful, wicked life. I can do what the wild beast cannot — kill myself. I hate my father; I love no one — neither mother nor friends. Perhaps Pamphilius alone."

And he again reverted to his friend; calling to mind their last meeting, their conversation and the words of Christ cited by Pamphilius: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Can that be true?" he asked himself. He began to stir up his recollections of the discussion with Pamphilius, and his memory dwelt with predilection on the serene, fearless and joyful countenance of his friend, and he was filled with a desire to see and hear him again, and above all to believe what he had been told by him. "Who am I after all? A man in search of happiness. I sought for it in luxury and lust, but failed to find it there. And those who live as I have tried to live will fail in like manner. They are

all malicious and are all of them suffering. On the other hand, there is one man who is always joyful, because he is not in search of anything. He tells me that there are many such as he; that all men may become such; that I, for one, can, if I be so minded, on condition that I carry out the precepts given by his Master. Now what if all this be true?

"True or not true, there's an attraction about it which I cannot withstand. I shall go."

And repeating this to himself, Julius passed out of the shady grove, and, determined never again to return home, wended his way to the village in which the Christians lived.

CHAPTER III.

JULIUS walked on briskly, his spirits rising in proportion as he drew nearer the village and the colors grew more distinct and lifelike in the picture he set before his mind of the life led by the Christians.

Just as the sun was sinking beneath the horizon, and he was about to take a short rest, he met a man by the wayside, reposing and taking his evening meal.

He was a person of middle age, and, to judge by externals, of considerable intellectual culture. He was seated, and was leisurely eating olives and bread. As soon as he saw Julius he said with a smile: "Good evening, young man; you have still a long journey before you.

Be seated and rest yourself awhile." Julius thanked him and sat down beside him.

"Whither bound, may I ask?" he queried.

"I am going to the Christians," replied Julius; and in answer to further questions he narrated his whole life and the mental process which had resulted in this sudden resolution.

The stranger listened attentively, and in silence broken rarely by such questions as seemed necessary to clear up some obscure allusion, or throw light upon some event or opinion, the knowledge of which had been taken for granted. Comment or opinion he offered none. When at length Julius brought his story to an end, he gathered up the food that remained over after his meal was done, adjusted his garments, and said: "Young man, do not carry out your design; you have wandered away from the direct road. I know life; you do not. Listen: I shall analyze the principal events of your past history and your reflections upon them; and after you have had them presented to you in the form which they have assumed in my mind, you can take any

course that commends itself to you as a wise one. You are young, wealthy, handsome, strong — your heart is a seething whirlpool of raging passions. You now yearn for a quiet retreat, in which those passions shall not disturb you and you shall be spared the suffering produced by their effects; you are willing, moreover, to believe that you will find such a haven among the Christians. Now, there is no such port of safety, dear young friend, there or elsewhere; because that which agitates and torments you is not located in Cilicia or in Rome, but has its abode within yourself. In the quiet of a sequestered village those same passions will rage within you and convulse you — only a hundred-fold more violently than before. The fraud or mistake of the Christians (I have no mind to judge them) consists in their refusal to recognize human nature. The only persons really capable of putting Christian teaching into practice are old men, in whom the snow and frost of age have quenched the last embers of human passion. A man in the flower of his years

and strength, especially a young man like yourself, who has not yet tasted the fruits of life and does not even know his own mind, cannot submit to their law, because that law is founded — not on human nature — but on the idle imaginings of Christ their founder. If you become one of them, you will continue to suffer from the same causes as before, only to a much greater extent. Now your passions lure you out of the right road into devious paths and byways; but, having once gone astray, you have it in your power to retrace your steps and set yourself right; and you enjoy, besides, the satisfaction of passions set free — *i.e.*, the joy of life. But living as a Christian, and curbing your passions, so to say, by force, you will still be liable to go astray — only more frequently and irremediably than before; and you will endure, over and above, the undying torment caused by the unappeased appetites of human nature. Let loose the pent up water of a dam, and it will moisten and fructify field and meadow and refresh the beasts that are grazing thereon; dam it up,

and it will delve into the soil and flow in a thick, muddy stream. It is even so with the human passions. The teaching of the Christians (with the exception of certain beliefs with which they console and comfort themselves and on which I have no wish to dwell at present), in so far as it affects their daily life, may be summed up as follows: they condemn violence; they disapprove of wars and courts of justice; they refuse to recognize property; they repudiate the sciences and arts — in a word, they eschew everything that tends to make life bright and pleasant. Even this would be well, if all men corresponded to the description which they give of their teacher. But, so far is this from being the case, that it is an absolute impossibility. Men are naturally evil-minded and swayed by their passions. It is this constant play of the passions, and the clashing and struggling that results, which hold people fast in that network of conditions in which they live. Savages know no restrictions; a single individual among them would, for the sake of glutting his lusts, annihilate

the entire world, if all men submitted to evil as meekly as the Christians. If the gods endowed men with a sentiment of anger, vindictiveness, even of malice against the malicious, we may take it that they did so because these sentiments were necessary to the preservation of human life.

"The Christians hold that these sentiments are evil, and that without them men would be happy: there would then be no murders, no executions, no wars. This is true; but one might just as well assert that it would materially contribute to the happiness of men, if they were relieved of the necessity of eating and drinking!

"There would, indeed, be no hunger nor thirst, nor any of the calamities they produce. But this supposition does not change human nature one iota. And so it is with all the other human passions: indignation, malice, vindictiveness, even sexual love, and love of luxury, pomp, and greatness, are likewise characteristics of the gods, hence they are also, in a modified form, traits proper to man-

kind. Root out the necessity of nourishing man, and at the same stroke you annihilate man himself; in like manner, demolish the human passions and you thereby demolish humanity itself. The same remark holds good of property, which the Christians, it is alleged, refuse to recognize. Look around you and you will find that every vineyard, every kitchen garden, every house, every mule, has been produced solely and alone because property existed and was respected. Abolish the principle of private property and there will not be a single vineyard planted, not a beast of burden trained or broken in. The Christians assert that they possess no property; still they enjoy its fruits. They say that they have everything in common, and that they bring in all their possessions and put them together. But what they bring in, they have received from men who own property. They are simply throwing dust in people's eyes, or, on the most favorable supposition, are deceiving themselves. You tell me that they work with their own hands to support themselves; but what they produce

would not suffice to support them, if they did not lay under contribution that which has been produced by other people who recognize the rights of property. If they did succeed in supporting life, there would be no place in their social system for the arts and sciences. They deny the advantages of our arts and sciences. And they cannot do otherwise. The whole gist and tenor of their teaching is calculated to lead man back to his primitive state, to savagery, to beastliness. They cannot employ the arts and sciences in the service of humanity; and, as they are wholly ignorant of them, they reject them. Neither can they employ in the service of humanity those capacities and gifts which constitute the exclusive prerogative of man and draw him nearer to the gods. They will have no temples, no statues, no theatres, no museums. They assert that they have no need of them. The readiest way to avoid blushing at one's own baseness is to contemn nobility. Their teacher was an ignorant deceiver, and they are not unsuccessful in their attempts to imitate him. Further-

more, they are impious. They refuse to recognize the gods or their interference in human affairs. They acknowledge only the Father of their teacher, whom they call their father, and their teacher himself, who, they say, revealed to them all the secrets of life. Their doctrine is a wretched fraud. Weigh this well: our belief is that the universe is maintained by the gods, and that the gods watch over and protect man. In order to live well, people are bound to honor the gods, to seek truth, — and think. Hence our life is regulated on the one hand by the will of the gods, and on the other by the collective wisdom of humanity. We live, think, and seek; and are therefore advancing towards truth. They, on the contrary, have no gods, nor divine will, nor human wisdom to look to, but must make the best of their blind faith in their crucified teacher and in whatever he taught them. Now, decide for yourself, which is the more trustworthy guide: the will of the gods and the joint, untrammelled activity of the wisdom of all humanity, or — obligatory,

unreasoning faith in the sayings of one man?"

Julius was struck by these remarks of the stranger, especially by his last question. Not only was his resolution to become a Christian completely shaken, but it now seemed quite incredible that the stress of misfortune should have driven him to the verge of such folly. There was, however, one other question still unsettled: what was he to do now, and how was he to set about extricating himself from the embarrassing situation that had made him thus desperate? And, having pointed out this difficulty, he asked the stranger for advice.

"I was coming to that very problem," the stranger said. "What is to be done? The line of action you must pursue is, as far as human wisdom is accessible to me, perfectly clear. All your troubles have their source in your passions. It was passion that whirled you away and took you so far out of your road that you have suffered gravely in consequence. Life's lessons usually take this form. You should learn them well and benefit by them.

You have experienced much, and you now know what is sweet and what is bitter. You run no risk of unwittingly repeating the same mistakes. Profit by your experience. What grieves and upsets you most is your enmity with your father. It had its origin in your position Choose another and it will vanish, or at least will no longer manifest itself in the same acute form.

"All your sufferings are due to the irregularity of your position. You abandoned yourself to the pleasures of youth. This was natural, and therefore right. And it continued right as long as it beseemed your age. But the season passed and yet you continued with the strength of a man to indulge in the freaks of a youth — and this was wrong. You are now of an age when your will must supplement nature's, and you must become a man and a citizen, serving the commonwealth, working for the good of all as well as for your own. Your father suggests that you should marry. This is wise counsel. You have passed through one stage of life — youth — and have now

entered upon another. All your uneasiness and fears are but so many symptoms of a period of transition. Look the truth manfully in the face; admit that the season of youth is gone by; and, flinging dauntlessly aside everything that was proper to that season without being characteristic of manhood, enter the new road. Marry: give up the frivolous gayeties of youth; occupy your mind with the interests of commerce, with public affairs, with sciences and arts, and not only will you be reconciled with your father and your friends, but you will find rest and happiness. The root of your troubles was the abnormal, unnatural position you occupied. You have now reached manhood's estate, and it is your duty to take a wife and become a man. Hence, my chief counsel to you is: carry out your father's wish, — marry.

"If you feel that that isolation and retirement which you imagine exists among the Christians has still a charm for you; if you are attracted to the study of philosophy rather than to the activity of public life, you can give

loose reins to your wishes with benefit to yourself only on condition that you have first studied life and learned its inner meaning. And this you can do only as an independent citizen and father of a family. If, when you have reached that point, you still feel drawn as strongly as ever towards retirement and contemplation, give yourself up to it without hesitation ; for it will then be a genuine predilection and not a mere outburst of discontent, as it clearly is at present. Then follow whither it leads you."

The last words, more than anything that had gone before, brought conviction to the mind of Julius. He warmly thanked the stranger, and returned home. His mother gave him a most cordial welcome. His father, too, informed of his resolution to submit to his will and marry the young girl he had chosen for him, became reconciled with his son.

CHAPTER IV.

THREE months later Julius's marriage with the beautiful Eulalia was duly celebrated, and the young couple took up their residence in a house of their own. Julius, having radically changed his way of life, took over that branch of commerce which his father ceded to him, and began fairly to settle down as a respectable member of the community.

One day he drove over to a little town not far distant on some business connected with his firm, and there, while lounging in a merchant's shop, he caught sight of Pamphilius passing by the door accompanied by a girl who was unknown to him. They were both heavily laden with grapes which they offered for sale. Julius, recognizing his friend, went out to him,

greeted him, and asked him in to pass an hour in quiet conversation.

The girl, observing Pamphilius's desire to enter the shop with his friend, and noticing that he hesitated to leave her alone, at once assured him that she did not need his services and that she would sit there by herself and wait for a purchaser for the grapes.

Pamphilius thanked her and accompanied Julius into the shop. Julius asked and received permission of his friend, the merchant, to retire with Pamphilius to an inner apartment where they might enjoy a little quiet talk.

Once there, the friends began to question each other about the ups and downs they had met with since they had last seen each other.

Pamphilius's life had glided smoothly on, bringing no material change: he still lived in the Christian community, was a bachelor as before, and felt, he assured his friend, that every year, every day, and every hour brought him increase of happiness.

Julius thereupon narrated his experiences,

and described how he had been on the point of becoming a Christian and was already on the road to the Christian village, when he was stopped by the stranger who opened his eyes to the errors of the Christians, and made him sensible of his duty to marry. "And I acted upon his advice and am now a married man," he concluded.

"And are you happy now?" asked Pamphilius. "Have you found in marriage the bliss the stranger promised you?"

"Happy?" repeated Julius. "What is the meaning of the word happy?

"If we are to take it to connote the perfect realization of one's desires, then I am not happy. I am conducting my business affairs with a fair degree of success, and I am also beginning to be respected by my neighbors; and both these circumstances afford me a considerable amount of satisfaction. True, I daily come in contact with many citizens who are much wealthier and more widely respected than I am: but I flatter myself that a time will come when I shall overtake and possibly out-

strip them in both these respects. This aspect of my life, then, is very satisfactory; with respect to my marriage, to be frank with you, I fear I cannot say quite as much. I will go a step further, and confess that that union, which was to have conferred joy and happiness upon me, has disappointed me; that the pleasure I experienced from it in the beginning has ever since been on the wane, and that now, in lieu of married bliss, I am face to face with misery. My wife is handsome, intelligent, good-natured, accomplished. At first she made me indescribably happy. But at present numerous causes of disagreement are ever cropping up between us — you cannot understand this, not being married yourself — now because she seeks my caresses when I am cold and indifferent to her, now because the rôles are changed and my temporary indifference has passed over to her. Love, moreover, needs the charm of novelty to feed it. A woman much less attractive than my wife exercises at first a much greater fascination over me than she does, and then again grows far more insipid than even

my wife. I have felt this more than once. No; honestly, I may say that I have not found what I hoped for in marriage. The philosophers, my friend, are right: life never gives all that the soul longs for. I have verified the truth of this in marriage. But the circumstance that life withholds from us the happiness which the human soul yearns for is by no means a proof that your deceitful system supplies it," he concluded, with a laugh.

"Why deceitful?" asked Pamphilius. "In what do you detect symptoms of fraud?"

"Your deception consists in this: that in order to deliver mankind from the calamities that are inseparable from the affairs of life, you repudiate all the affairs of life, nay, life itself. In order to spare men the pain of disillusion, you cause them to eschew all illusions; you repudiate — even marriage."

"We do no such thing!" protested Pamphilius.

"If it is not marriage that you repudiate, then it is love."

"Love!" exclaimed Pamphilius. "Why, we

abjure everything except love. Love, with us, is the corner-stone of the whole edifice."

"I do not understand you, then," said Julius. "Judging by what I have heard from others, and, I may add, by your own example — for although you and I are of the same age, you are still unmarried — I gather that you Christians have no conjugal union. You do not sever the marriage ties which you have already contracted, but you make no new ones. You take no thought for the perpetuation of the human race; and, if the earth were peopled with none but Christians, humanity would soon cease to exist," exclaimed Julius, echoing an assertion which he had heard many times before.

"That is scarcely a fair way of stating the case, is it?" replied Pamphilius. "It is true that we do not deliberately make it our aim to perpetuate the human race, nor do we take the matter so very much to heart, as I have often heard it remarked by some of your wise men. Our minds are set at rest on the subject by our firm belief that our Father, who vigilantly watches over mankind, is mindful of all their

wants; it is our object to live in accordance with His will. If He wills it that the human race should subsist, He will likewise find the means of perpetuating it; if not, it will inevitably come to an end. That, however, is no care of ours; our task is the more modest one of living according to His will. His will is manifested to us both in our own nature and in the revelation He has vouchsafed to give us, which says that a man shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh. Marriage is not only not forbidden by our laws but is directly encouraged by our elders who are learned in the law. The main difference between your marriage and ours consists in the revelation given to us from on high that every lustful glance at a woman is sinful, and the practical results which our belief in that revelation has produced, and which may be summed up as follows: we and our women, instead of leaving no means untried to dress finely and beautify ourselves for the purpose of kindling carnal desires in the hearts of those who look upon us, direct all our efforts to the stifling of all such

impure movements, so that the sentiment of love among us, as among brothers and sisters, should be strong enough to outweigh the feeling of lust for one woman to which you give the name of love."

"All that is well and good," remarked Julius; "but surely you cannot stifle the feeling of pleasure and love that springs up within us when we look upon the beautiful. Not to wander far afield for an instance, I am satisfied that that pretty girl with whom you brought the grapes, in spite of her attire, which works wonders in the way of hiding her charms, kindles in your breast the sentiment of love for woman."

"I do not think that that is so," said Pamphilius, blushing. "I never thought of her beauty. You are the first to suggest such a thing. She is but a sister to me. But to come back to what I was saying about the difference between marriage with you and with us: it arises, as I was remarking, from the circumstance that with you carnal lust, under the name of beauty, love, service of the goddess Venus, is deliberately provoked and main-

tained ; whereas, with us, on the contrary, it is avoided, not because we hold it to be an evil (God has created no evil), — indeed we esteem it a positive good, — but because it can and does become an evil, a temptation, as we call it, when not confined to its proper place. Now, we strain every nerve to avoid this. And that is the reason why I am not married yet, although I know of nothing to prevent me from taking a wife to-morrow."

"And what will determine your choice?"

"The will of God."

"How do you discover it?"

"If you never look for its manifestations you will never find them. If you are continually on the watch for them they become visible and clear, as clear as divination by sacrifices, or by the flight of birds, is to you. And as you have wise men among you who interpret to you the will of your gods by the light of their own knowledge, and by signs which they discern in the entrails of the victim or the flight of birds, in like manner we, too, have our wise men — elders — who make known to us

the will of our Father by means of the Christ's revelation, by the promptings of their heart, by the thoughts of others, and, above all, by the love they cherish for their fellow-man."

"All that is much too vague," objected Julius. "Who is to tell you, for example, when and whom you should marry? Now, when the time came for me to marry, I had the choice of three girls. These possible wives were selected from among all the others by reason of their uncommon beauty and great wealth; and my father consented in advance to my marriage with any one of the three. It was from these three that I selected my Eulalia, because she was the prettiest and in my eyes the most fascinating. All that was quite natural. But who will guide your choice?"

"Before giving a direct reply to your question," said Pamphilius, "let me first tell you that, in our religion, as all men are equal in the eyes of our Father, so are they equal in our eyes, both in respect of their position and in regard to their physical and moral qualities. It follows from this that our choice (if I must

employ a word which for us has no meaning) is not and cannot be in any way circumscribed. Any human being living on this earth can become the husband or wife of a Christian."

"That makes it all the more difficult to fix one's choice," said Julius.

"Let me tell you what one of our elders remarked to me the other day on the difference between Christian and Pagan marriages," replied Pamphilius. "The Pagan chooses that girl of all others who, to his thinking, is qualified to yield him the highest degree and greatest variety of enjoyment. The effect of this condition is to make him dart his eyes with lightning rapidity from one to another, irresolute which to choose; for what makes it the more difficult to come to a decision is that the enjoyment in question is an unknown quantity veiled in the shadowy future. A Christian, on the other hand, is not embarrassed by the element of personal choice; that is to say, considerations of a purely personal nature occupy a secondary rather than the foremost place. His one absorbing care is that

his marriage shall not run counter to the will of God."

"But how is it possible to oppose God's will by a marriage?"

"If I were to forget the Iliad," replied Pamphilius, "that you and I were wont to study and read aloud together in bygone times, there would be little to wonder at and nothing to censure. But if you forget it, who live in the midst of philosophers and poets, you cannot plead the same justification. Now, what is the Iliad but the story of the transgression of the will of God by a marriage? And Menelaus and Paris, and Helen and Achilles and Agamemnon and Chryseis are all elements of a description of the terrible calamities that overtook, and do now-a-days still overtake, people who oppose their will to that of God in this matter of marriage."

"In what does this opposition consist?"

"In the fact that what a man loves in a woman is not a fellow-creature like himself but the personal enjoyment which his union with her will bring him, and for the purpose of procuring this pleasure he contracts marriage. A

Christian marriage is not possible unless a man is inspired by love for his fellow-creatures ; and the person whom he takes for partner must in the first place be the object of this brotherly affection of man for his fellow. As it is out of the question to build a house unless a foundation has been laid, or to paint a picture unless you have first prepared the canvas or other material upon which you propose to paint it, so carnal love can never be lawful, reasonable or enduring unless it is raised upon a structure of love, and reverence of man for man. Only on this basis is it possible to establish a wise Christian family life."

"Still it is not, I confess, quite clear to my mind why the marriage you term Christian should exclude that species of love for womankind which Paris felt."

"I do not suggest that Christian marriage does not admit exclusive love for one woman ; on the contrary, it is judicious and holy only when such love is one of its elements. But what I should like to bring out with a degree of clearness equal to the importance of the point

is that real exclusive love for a woman is possible only when the more general love for all mankind is respected and maintained intact. That description of exclusive love for a woman which the poets sing, and proclaim as excellent in itself, although not founded upon the love of man for his fellows, does not deserve the name of love. It is animal lust, which very often loses itself in hatred. The best proof of my thesis that what is usually termed love — Eros — changes to beastliness when not resting on the broad basis of brotherly affection for all men, is the case in which violence is employed against the very woman whom the ravisher professes to love, even while causing her pain that will retain its sting as long as life endures. Can a man be said to cherish affection for a person whom he thus tortures? Now in Pagan marriages one frequently finds cases of masked violence, when a man marries a girl who either simply does not love him in return or loves another, and ruthlessly inflicts pain and suffering upon her, simply that he may appease the brutal appetite which is misnamed love."

"I grant all that," interrupted Julius; "but am I to take it that if the girl does love him, it follows that there is no injustice in the matter? If so, I do not see in what respect a Christian union differs from a Pagan marriage."

"I am not acquainted with the details of your own marriage," replied Pamphilius; "but it is perfectly obvious to me that every marriage, wherever and whenever contracted, at the root of which lies mere personal enjoyment, cannot but prove an abundant source of discord, just as the process of feeding cannot take place among animals, or among human beings who are but little removed from the mere animal stage, without breeding quarrels and fights: each one is eager to seize upon a titbit, and as there are not enough of these delicious morsels for them all, the result is a scramble and a fight. If the quarrel does not actually break out into active hostilities, it is none the less real for being latent. The weak individual longs for the luscious morsel, conscious though he is that his more powerful neighbor will never cede it to him, and although he discerns the impossibility

of snatching it from his rival by force, still he eyes him with secret, envious hatred, and is ever ready to profit by any favorable opportunity that offers to deprive him of it. It is just the same with Pagan marriages — only that the results are far worse in degree, owing to the circumstance that the coveted object is a human being; and so discord and hatred are engendered between the spouses themselves."

"And how do you propose to compel the intending spouses to love each other and no one else besides? In every case the young girl or the young man will be found to love some one else; in which case, according to you, marriage is impossible. From this I clearly perceive that the people who maintain that you Christians do not marry at all are quite right. This is also the reason why you are single, and will probably ever remain so. For how is it conceivable that a man who marries a girl should have never previously inflamed the heart of any other woman, or that a girl should have reached the age of maturity without having ever awakened the feeling of love in the breast

of any man? What do you suggest that Helen should have done?"

"Our elder Cyril, speaking once of this matter, remarked that people in the Pagan world, without spending even a passing thought upon their duty of loving their fellow-men, without having ever done anything to educate such a feeling, are solicitous about one thing only: how to excite in their own breasts a passionate love for woman; and they leave nothing undone to foster this passion. It is for this reason that in their world every Helen, or Helen-like woman, arouses the love of many men. The rivals fight with each other and strain every nerve to excel each other, just like brutes eager to win the female. And to a greater or lesser extent their marriage is a struggle — a form of violence. In our community we not only never think of personal enjoyment of beauty, but we sedulously avoid all those seductive contrivances and artifices likely to act as temptations thereto, which the Pagan world has raised almost to the dignity of apotheosis. We fix our thoughts upon the

obligation we are under to reverence and love our neighbor — comprising in this term all men, whether they happen to be of unsurpassing beauty or of repulsive ugliness. We do our best to educate that sentiment, and this is why with us love for our fellow-men gets the upper hand over the seductions of beauty, conquers them, and removes all pretexts for quarrels and feuds that have their source in the relations of the sexes.

"A Christian contracts marriage only when his union with the woman, between whom and himself there is a bond of mutual affection, causes bitterness to no one. Cyril goes even so far as to say that a Christian will not even feel an attachment for a woman, unless he knows that his marriage with her will not cause a feeling of pain to any one."

"But is such a thing conceivable?" objected Julius. "Is a man, then, the master of his likes and dislikes?"

"Not if he have already given them loose rein; but he can avoid arousing them and arrest their development. Take, as a case in

point, the relations of fathers to their daughters, mothers to their sons, brothers to their sisters. A mother, daughter, or sister, how beautiful soever she may be, is never conceived of as an object of personal enjoyment by her son, her father, or her brother, and so the coarse, animal feelings are not awakened. They would be aroused, in such a case, if the man discovered that his supposed daughter, mother, or sister was no relation whatever; but even then the sentiment in question would be feeble, and easily amenable to reason: it would cost the man but little effort to curb or wholly repress it. The reason why the coarse, carnal feeling would be weak is because there would lie at its root some sentiment of filial, paternal, or brotherly love. Why do you persist in doubting that it is possible, and even easy, to evoke and educate in man exactly such a sentiment towards all women as is actually entertained towards mothers, daughters, and sisters; and to cause the feeling of conjugal love to flourish on this basis? As a young man will not allow himself to cherish anything like sexual affection for the

young girl whom he looked upon as his sister, until he is perfectly satisfied that she is not his sister, so a Christian refuses to entertain a similar feeling for any woman whatever, until he knows that such love for her on his part will cause no one pain or displeasure."

"But how if two men fall in love with the same girl?"

"One of them will sacrifice his love for the happiness of the other."

"But suppose she herself loves one of them?"

"Then he whom she loves less will sacrifice his love for her happiness."

"Well, but if she loves the two, and both insist on sacrificing their sentiments, she will not marry either, I take it?"

"In a case of that kind the elders would weigh the matter well, and advise the parties to take a course that would result in the greatest amount of happiness for all concerned, combined with the greatest amount of love."

"But that is not the course usually taken, and the reason is that it is contrary to human nature."

"Human nature? Which human nature? Besides being an animal, a man is, I presume, likewise a man, and if the relations to woman which our Christian religion advocates are not in harmony with man's animal nature, they are in perfect accordance with his rational nature. And when he makes his reason the handmaid of his animal nature, he falls lower in the scale of God's creatures than the very brutes — he descends to violence, to incest, to which no animal sinks. But when he employs his rational nature to curb his animal instincts, when the latter are forced into the service of the former, then, and only then, does he obtain that happiness which alone is capable of satisfying his yearnings."

CHAPTER V.

"But now let me hear what you have to tell me about yourself. I noticed you in the street with a beautiful girl with whom, if I may judge by appearances, you live together in that town of yours. Now, tell me, can it be possible that you have no desire to become her husband?"

"I have never given the subject any serious consideration," replied Pamphilius. "She is the daughter of a Christian widow to whom I render what services I can, just as others do, besides myself. I serve the mother as I do the daughter, and I love both equally well. You wish to know whether the love I feel for her is of a nature to justify my marrying her? The question is a painful one for me, but I will

give you a straightforward answer. The idea has, I confess, occurred to me; but there is a youth of my acquaintance who also loves her, and that is why I have never yet seriously entertained it. He, too, is a Christian, and he loves us both dearly; and I could not for a moment think of doing anything that might give him pain. So I live on without giving these ideas any place in my thoughts. All my desires are centred in one aim — to fulful the law of love — love for our fellow-men. That is the one thing necessary. As for wedlock, I shall marry when I am convinced that it is my duty to do so."

"Those are your ideas: but the mother's standpoint may be different. It cannot surely be immaterial to her whether she gets a son-in-law who is kindly and industrious, or one who is the reverse. She will be naturally desirous of having you for such a near relation."

"By no means. It is perfectly indifferent to her; because she is well aware that all our brethren are to the full as willing as I am to serve her, just as we are to be useful to every

other brother and sister; and that I shall continue to do what I can for her in exactly the same way, whether I do or do not become her son-in-law. If the outcome of it all should be my marriage with her daughter, I shall welcome such a consummation with joy — just as I should her marriage with somebody else."

"No, no; what you are saying now is utterly impossible. And herein lies the most terrible thing I have observed in you Christians — that you so completely deceive yourselves! And in this way you deceive others as well. That stranger whom I told you about a few minutes ago was right in what he asserted about you. While listening to your glowing descriptions I involuntarily succumb to the spell of the charming life which you depict; but, when I think it carefully over, I see that it is all deception — and a deception which leads to savagery, to brutality, to a life approaching that of the beasts."

"In what do you discern this savagery?"

"In the circumstance that, as you work to

earn a livelihood, you have no leisure or opportunity to devote yourselves to science and art. Here are you, for instance, attired in a ragged garment, with rough, horny hands and feet, while your mate, who might well be a goddess of beauty, is as like a slave as a freewoman could be. You Christians have no hymns of Apollo, no temples, no poetry, no games — in a word, nothing of all those gifts of the gods to man which adorn life and make it beautiful. To grind, grind, and grind, like slaves or oxen, merely in order to support yourself on the coarsest of food — what else is that but voluntary and impious renunciation of the human will and nature?"

"There it is again," exclaimed Pamphilius; "that tiresome human nature! In what does this nature consist, pray? Is it in torturing slaves with work beyond their strength, in the butchering of one's brothers or reducing them to slavery, or is it in transforming woman from what she was and is into an object of amusement? . . And yet all this alone beseems human nature. Is that the essence of human

nature, or does it not rather consist in living in love and fellowship with all men, and feeling oneself a member of one universal brotherhood?

"You, too, are grievously mistaken if you imagine that we refuse to recognize science and arts. We highly appreciate all the gifts and talents with which human nature is endowed.

"We look upon all man's inborn capacities as means given to assist him to attain one sole end, to the realization of which our whole life is devoted, and that is the fulfilment of the will of God. In science and arts we discern, not a vulgar pastime, fit only to give transient pleasure to idle people, but serious avocations, of which we have a right to demand what we require of all human callings, namely, that, in pursuing them, the same active love of God and of one's fellow-man be made manifest which permeates all the acts of a Christian. We do not recognize as true science anything so called which fails to help us to live better; neither do we value art but that which purifies

our thoughts and projects, raises up the soul, and increases the forces necessary to a life of labor and of love. We lose no opportunity to develop, as far as is possible, knowledge of this kind in ourselves and in our children; and the charms of such art we feel and delight in during our leisure moments. We read and study the writings bequeathed to us by the wisdom of men who lived before us; we chant songs, we paint pictures, and our songs and our pictures comfort us, cheer us up in moments of sadness. Therefore it is that we cannot bring ourselves to approve the way in which you Pagans apply the arts and sciences. Your scholars employ their natural capacities and acquired knowledge to invent new ways of working evil to others. They are always busy making the methods of war more effective, more deadly; that is to say, they are engaged in making murder easier. They are ever concocting new schemes for earning money; that is, for enriching some persons at the expense of others. Your art is utilized for the building and ornamentation of temples in honor of

gods, in whom the most enlightened among you have long since ceased to believe, but faith in whom you try to keep alive in others, in the hope that by means of this fraud it will be all the more easy for you to keep them well in hand. Your statues are raised to the strongest and most cruel of your tyrants, whom no one esteems, but all fear. In the plays given in your theatres criminal love is lauded and applauded. Music, among you, is degraded to the rôle of a means of tickling the senses of rich gluttons after they have gorged themselves to satiety on the meats and drinks of their luxurious banquets. The highest use to which painting is put is to depict, in houses of ill-fame, scenes at which no man can glance without blushing, whose senses are not paralyzed by the fumes of wine, or blunted by beastly passion.

"No; it is not for such purposes that man is endowed with those higher attributes which distinguish him from the beasts of the field. They were not given to be turned into a plaything for the delectation of our bodies. By

consecrating our whole life to the fulfilment of God's will we are employing, and employing to the highest purpose, all those nobler gifts and faculties which we have received for God."

"Yes," Julius answered; "all that would be sublime, if only life were possible under such conditions. But one cannot live so. You are only deluding yourselves. You refuse to acknowledge our protection; but if it were not for the Roman legions, could you live peaceably? You enjoy the protection which you refuse to acknowledge. Even certain members of your own community — you yourself told me — defended themselves. You do not recognize property, and yet you enjoy it; your brethren own property and give it to you; you yourself take care not to give away for nothing the grapes you carry; you sell them, and you will also in turn make purchases. Now, all this is a delusion. If you carried out what you say to the letter, then I should understand your position; but as it is, you are deceiving others and yourselves to boot."

Julius waxed hot during the conversation,

and gave expression to every thought that flitted through his mind. Pamphilius remained silent, awaiting the end. When Julius ceased speaking, he said

"You are in error when you say that we enjoy without recognizing the protection you afford us. We have no need of Roman legions, because we attach no importance whatever to those things which require to be protected by violence. Our happiness is centred in that which needs no defence, which no man can take away from us. If material objects which you regard as personal property pass through our hands, it should be borne in mind that we do not look upon them or treat them as our own; we hand them over to those for whose support they are necessary. It is true that we sell grapes, but not for profit; only in order to obtain the necessaries of life for those who are in need of them. If any one wanted to take those grapes from us, we should give them up without the slightest resistance. For the same reason we have nothing to fear from an invasion of barbarians. If they wanted to

deprive us of the products of our labor, we should yield them up at once; if they insisted on our working for them, this also we should do with joy; and not only would the barbarians have no cause to kill us, but it would be detrimental to what they consider their own interests to do so. They would soon get to understand us, would even grow to love us, and we should have less to suffer from them than we now have to endure from the enlightened people in whose midst we live and by whom we are persecuted.

"It has been frequently urged by you and yours that it is only in consequence of the rights of property being respected that one is enabled to obtain all those articles of food and clothing with which people are nourished and kept alive. But weigh the matter well, and then decide for yourself — by whom are all these necessaries of life really produced? By whose labor are those riches stored up and accumulated of which you are so proud? Is it by those who, sitting comfortably with folded arms, command their slaves and mer-

cenaries to go hither and thither, to do this and that, those who alone possess property to enjoy; or is it not rather by those poor necessitous workmen who, to earn a crust of bread, carry out their lord's commands while they themselves are deprived of all property, and scarcely receive for their share enough to keep them alive for a single day? And what grounds have you for supposing that these workmen, who are so lavish of their strength and energy now, when it is a question of executing orders which they frequently do not even understand, will give up every kind of exertion the moment it is made possible for them to undertake intelligible and moderate work, the results of which will benefit themselves and those whom they love and pity?

"The accusations you launch against us are mainly these: that we do not completely attain the end which we have in view, and that we actually deceive others when we say that we do not recognize violence and property, seeing that we enjoy the results of both. Now, if we are deceivers, it is useless to waste words upon

us: we are fit objects, not for anger, nor for accusation, but for scorn. And the scorn we joyfully accept, because it is one of our rules to contemn our own nothingness. But if we sincerely and earnestly strive to reach the end towards which we profess to be directing all our efforts, then your accusations appear unjust. If we aspire to strive, as my brethren and myself do, to live, in accordance with the law laid down by our Master, without violence or property, which is none of its fruits, our object in doing so obviously cannot be the attainment of material ends, the acquisition of riches, power, honors — for we gain none of these things thereby — but something wholly different. We are quite as keen as you Pagans are in the search of happiness; the only difference between us consists in the opposite views we take of what constitutes it. You place it in riches and honors, we in something very different. Our faith tells us that bliss is to be found, not in violence, but in submission; not in riches, but in giving everything away. And even as the flowers struggle upwards towards

the light, so do we move onwards towards what we see to be our happiness. We do not carry out everything that we should like to do for the attainment of our happiness; that is to say, we have not quite succeeded in casting off every habit of violence and property. This is true. But could it well be otherwise? Take yourself, for instance: you strain every nerve to obtain the prettiest wife, to acquire the largest fortune — but do you, does any one, succeed in this? If an archer does not hit the target, will he, because he has missed it many times in succession, cease altogether to aim at it? We are in exactly the same position. Our happiness lies — according to Christ's teaching — in love; but love excludes violence, and property — which flows from violence. We are all of us bent on seeking our happiness, but we do not fully succeed; moreover, we do not all set about it in precisely the same way, nor do we all attain it to the same extent."

"Yes; but why do you refuse to listen to the accumulated wisdom of mankind, why do you turn away from it and give ear only to your own

crucified master? Your thraldom, your servile submission to him, is precisely what most of all repels us in you."

"You are again mistaken, as are all those who imagine that, while professing the teachings which we do, we believe in them only because the man in whom we trust commanded us to do so. On the contrary, all those who with their whole soul seek for knowledge of the truth, for communion with the Father, all who yearn for true happiness, involuntarily, and without conscious effort, find themselves travelling along the same road that Christ traversed, and, instinctively taking their stand behind Him, are soon aware that He is leading the way. All who love God will converge towards and finally meet on this road — yourself among the number. He is the Son of God, the mediator between God and man; it is not that we have been told this by some one and therefore blindly believe it, but we hold it to be true because all those who seek God find His Son before them, and only through the Son do they understand, see, and know God."

Julius made no reply, and they both sat for a considerable time in unbroken silence.

"Are you happy?" he asked at length.

"I desire nothing better than what I have and am. Nor is this all. I am continually experiencing a feeling of perplexity, a dim consciousness of injustice somewhere. Why is it that I am so unspeakably happy?" exclaimed Pamphilius, with a smile.

"Yes," sighed Julius; "it may be that I, too, should have been happy, happier than I am, had I not met the stranger I told you of, and had I gone over to you."

"If you think so, what is keeping you back?"

"How about my wife?"

"You say that she has a leaning towards Christianity; if so, she will join us along with you."

"True: but we have only just begun a different kind of life; would it be wise to break it up thus suddenly? We have begun it now, and we had better live it out to the end," said Julius, vividly picturing to himself the disappointment of his father, his mother, his

friends, if he were to become a Christian, but more vividly still the continuous and painful effort it would cost him to effect this revolution.

At this moment the young girl, Pamphilius's friend, accompanied by a youth, came up to the shop door. Pamphilius went out to them, and the youth told him, in the presence of Julius, that he had been sent by Cyril to buy some leather. The grapes were already sold and wheat purchased with the money received. Pamphilius proposed that the youth should return home with Magdalen, bringing the wheat with them, and undertaking himself to buy the leather and carry it home.

"It will be better for you," he urged.

"No; it is better for Magdalen that you should go with her," the youth answered, and went away. Julius accompanied his friend to the stores of a merchant with whom he was acquainted, where Pamphilius filled the sacks with wheat, handed over a small portion to Magdalen, slung his own heavy burden over

his shoulders, said good-by to his friend, and, walking side by side with the young girl, left the city.

At a bend in the street, Pamphilius looked back and smilingly nodded to Julius, and then, smiling still more joyfully, made some remark to Magdalen as they disappeared from Julius's horizon.

"Yes; it would indeed have been better for me had I then gone over to the Christians," exclaimed Julius to himself. And in his imagination arose two pictures, which kept alternating with each other: now he beheld the robust Pamphilius, with the tall, strong girl, carrying baskets on their heads, their faces radiant with kindliness and joy; now he saw his own domestic hearth, which he had quitted that morning and to which he would return that night, and his pampered, pretty wife, whose charms had already begun to pall upon him, decked out in fine apparel, adorned with wristbands, and lolling on rich carpets and soft, yielding cushions.

But Julius had little time for thinking —

he was accosted first by some merchants who had come to see him, then by comrades; and they entered at once upon the usual occupations, which wound up with dinner and drinking, and at night with his wife.

CHAPTER VI.

Ten years passed away; and during all that time Julius never once came across his friend. He thought less and less frequently of their former meetings and discussions; and the impressions they had created in his mind respecting Pamphilius himself, and the life of the Christians generally, grew gradually dimmer and dimmer, till at last they seemed to have faded away. Julius's own life ran in the common groove. His father had died, and he had taken over the entire business of the firm — a very complicated concern, with its old customers, its salesmen in Africa, its clerks at home, its debts to be collected, and debts to be paid. Julius was engrossed in business in spite of himself, and gave up all his time to it. Be-

sides, he had the new cares of his wife to bear. Then, again, he was elected to discharge the duties of a civic office; and this new occupation, flattering his self-love, delighted him. From that time forward, in addition to his business affairs, he turned his attention to public matters, and, being a man of parts, and endowed with the gift of flowing, facile speech, he began to make his mark among his fellow-citizens, and bade fair to rise in time to the highest civic honors in his native place.

Those ten years had likewise wrought considerable changes in the sphere of his family life — changes which, to him, at least, were highly distasteful. He was now the father of three children, and one of the effects of their birth was to estrange him still more from their mother. In the first place, his wife had lost much of her former freshness and beauty; and, in the next place, she had grown less solicitous about her husband than of yore, all her tenderness and caresses being lavished upon her offspring. Although the children were confided to the care of wet nurses and dry nurses,

as was the custom of the Pagans, Julius often found them in their mother's apartments, or, having looked for her there in vain, discovered her in her children's room. For the most part, Julius looked upon his children as an irksome burden — a source of trouble and taxation rather than pleasure. Absorbed in private and municipal affairs, Julius had given up his former dissolute life; but he considered that he stood in need of elegant repose after his day's labors, and this he no longer found in the society of his wife, especially as her intercourse with her female slave — a Christian — grew more and more intimate, and she allowed herself to be carried away by the charm of the new doctrine to such an extent that she discarded from her life all the outward gloss and varnish of Paganism, by which Julius set such store. Not finding in his wife's society what he sought there, Julius cultivated the close friendship of a woman of light conduct, in whose company he spent those leisure moments which remained to him after the day's duties were discharged. If you were to ask him

whether he was happy during those years of his life, he would have been at a loss what to answer — so numerous and absorbing were his occupations. From one business matter or pleasure he rushed rapidly onwards to another; but not one of them was of a nature thoroughly to satisfy his yearnings; of not one of them could he truly say that he desired it to last. Every serious affair he took in hand was such that the sooner he accomplished it, and had done with it, the easier he felt in mind; and there was not one of his pleasures which was not poisoned by something or other, not one free from the loathing that comes of satiety.

In this wise the stream of Julius's life rolled smoothly on, till one day an untoward event took place which nearly changed its whole course. He was taking part in the Olympian games, and was guiding his chariot successfully towards the goal, putting forth all his energies to outstrip another chariot that was slightly ahead of his, when he dashed up against it. One of the wheels of his chariot snapped in

two, he was thrown violently out, breaking two ribs and his arm. The injuries he sustained were very severe, but not mortal; he was conveyed to his home, and was confined to his bed for three months.

During these three months of intense physical pain, his mind became unusually active: he employed his enforced leisure in meditating upon his life, which he contemplated from a purely objective point of view, as if it were the life of a perfect stranger.

And his past life appeared to him in an unpleasant light, which was intensified by the occurrence, just then, of three disagreeable events, which occasioned him no inconsiderable pain. The first of these was the dishonesty of an old and trusted slave, who had loyally served Julius's father for many years, but now suddenly absconded with a heap of precious stones which he had received in Africa for his master's firm, thus inflicting heavy losses on Julius, and throwing his affairs into disorder. The second blow was the inconstancy of his concubine, who unceremoniously left him and

chose another protector for herself. The third and most painful stroke of all was the election of his rival to the high post of director, for which he himself was a candidate: the public elections took place during his illness, and he was rejected. All these reverses, Julius was convinced, were the outcome of his illness; which, in turn, resulted from his chariot's having moved just half an inch too much to the left. As he lay thus helpless in bed, his thoughts involuntarily turned on the trifling casualties on which his happiness depended; and then dwelt on the remembrance of his previous misfortunes, his attempt to become a Christian, and on Pamphilius, whom he had not seen for ten years. These recollections were refreshed by the conversations he had with his wife, who, now that he was suffering and in bed, used to pass the greater part of her time with him, telling him everything she had learned from her female slave about Christianity. This slave had lived for a time in the very community in which Pamphilius resided and was personally acquainted with him. Julius,

on hearing this, expressed a wish to see her, and, when she drew near his couch, questioned her in great detail concerning the life led by the Christians, and about Pamphilius in particular.

Pamphilius, she told him, was one of the best members of the brotherhood, and was beloved and esteemed by all; he was married to that same Magdalen with whom Julius had seen him ten years before, and he was now the father of several children. "Yes," concluded the slave; "those who doubt that God created men for their happiness, should pay a visit to that community, and look upon Pamphilius and Magdalen."

Julius dismissed the slave and remained alone, pondering upon the significance of what he had heard. He was smitten by a feeling of envy, whenever he compared Pamphilius's life with his own, and he resolved to drive such thoughts away. In order to distract himself somewhat, he took up a Greek manuscript, which his wife had left for him to peruse, and read the following:

"There are two roads, leading, the one to life, the other to death. The path of life consists in the following: In the first place, you must love God who created you, and, in the second place, love your neighbor as yourself; and do not unto another that which you would not wish done to yourself. The teaching implied in these words may be expressed thus: Bless those that curse you; pray for your enemies, and fast for your persecutors; for, if ye love them who love you, what thank have ye? Do not the heathens do even so? Love ye them that hate you and ye shall have no enemies. Flee the lusts of the flesh and the world. Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. If any man take away thy coat, let him have thy shirt also. If any man take what is thine, seek not to have it back, for this thou canst not. Give unto every one that asketh, and demand not back what once thou hast given; for the Father willeth that his beneficent gifts be bestowed upon all. Blessed is he who giveth according to the commandment.

"The second sermon of the doctrine: Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not commit fornication; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not use enchantment; thou shalt not poison; thou shalt not covet what belongs to thy neighbor. Thou shalt not swear; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not speak ill of any one; thou shalt not remember evil. Be not double-minded; be not double-tongued. . . . Let not thy word be false, nor vain, but let it be true to the deed. Be not greedy of gain; be not rapacious, nor a hypocrite, nor malicious, nor puffed up. Do not design evil play against your neighbor. Do not foster hatred towards other men, but admonish some, pray for others, and love others more than thou lovest thine own soul.

"My child, flee evil of every kind, and everything akin to evil. Be not angry, because anger leads up to murder; nor jealous, nor quarrelsome, nor hot-tempered, for the outcome of all these is murder. Be not lustful, my son, for lust leads up to fornication; use not

loose words in thy conversation, for the result thereof is adultery. My son, do not practise sorcery, cast no spells, pronounce no charms, and flee those who do such things, for they are idolatry. My son, be not mendacious, for lying is the road to robbery; be not greedy of silver, nor of honors, for robbery comes of these. Be not querulous, my son, for this is a source of blasphemy; nor insolent, nor evil-minded, for blasphemy is the fruit of all these. But be meek, for the meek shall inherit the earth. Be patient, and kindly, and forgiving, and lowly, and good. Exalt not thyself and frequent not the proud, but converse with the just and the humble. Whatsoever happeneth to thee welcome as a blessing, knowing that nothing happens against God's will. . . . . My son, foment not divisions, but make peace between those who have quarrelled. Open not wide thy palms to receive, nor narrow them when giving. Do not shrink from giving away, and having given, murmur not; for thou shalt know the good Dispenser of rewards. Turn not away thy face from the needy, but

stand by thy brother in all things; call nothing thine own, for if ye are heirs and co-partners in the incorruptible, how much more in what is perishable. Teach thy children from their tender years to fear God. Command not thy servants or thy slaves in anger, that they should not cease to fear God who rules over you both, for He cometh not to call people according to their looks, but He calls those whom the Spirit has prepared.

"And the way of death is this: First of all, it is evil and full of curses; and there is murder upon it, and adultery, lust and fornication, robbery and idolatry, sorcery, poisoning, rapacity, false witness, hypocrisy, double dealing, cunning, pride, malice, haughtiness, greed, foul language, envy, insolence, arrogance, self-love; here are to be found the persecutors of the just, the haters of truth and lovers of lies, they who deny that there will be a reward for the just, they who hold aloof from what is right and from the just judgment, those who are wakeful not for righteous but for evil purposes, who are strangers to meekness and to

patience; here are they who delight in vanity and yearn for rewards, who feel no pity for the poor, who work not for the overworked, who know not their Creator, the murderers of children, who shatter God's image to pieces, who turn away from the needy, trample on the oppressed, defenders of the rich, unjust judges of the poor, sinners in all things. Be on your guard, my children, with all such persons."

Long before he had read the manuscript through, he felt himself in the position in which many persons find themselves when they read a book — that is to say, other people's thoughts — with a sincere desire of seeking for truth: their souls enter into communion with those who suggested the thoughts. He kept on reading, divining beforehand what was to follow, and not only assenting to the ideas put forward, but himself, as it were, giving them expression.

There then occurred to him something so usual and seemingly so commonplace that it generally escapes our notice, and is yet one of the most mysterious, most momentous phe-

nomena of our lives: it consists in the circumstance that a so-called living man becomes truly alive when he enters into communion, unites himself, with the so-called dead, living one life with them. Julius's soul merged itself in those of the writers of these thoughts, and after this intimate communion he contemplated himself, surveyed his own life. And he himself and his whole life seemed to him a terrible mistake. He had not lived; but he had, by all his cares and anxieties about life, and all the temptations he had succumbed to, destroyed the very possibility of true life.

"I do not wish to trample upon and quench my life," he exclaimed to himself; "I wish to live, to take the road that leads to life."

All that Pamphilius had told him in their former conversations rose up before him now with the vividness and force of ten years before; and it all seemed so clear and obvious, that he was astonished that he could have given heed to the words of the stranger, and foregone his intention of becoming a Christian. One piece of advice which the stranger had

given him also recurred to him: "*When you have tasted life, then, if you will, go over to the Christians.*"

"I have tasted life," he said to himself; "and have found it void of attraction, void of substance." He likewise called to mind Pamphilius's promise that whenever he came to the Christians he would be sure of a cordial reception. "Enough," he exclaimed; "I have erred and suffered long enough; I will now leave everything, and become a Christian, and live according to the rules laid down here." He informed his wife, who was delighted to hear of his excellent intention.

She was, indeed, ready to follow him in all this. The only question now was how to set about executing his plan. What was to be done with the children? Should they, too, be taken and baptized, or left behind with their Pagan grandmother? Would it be advisable, would it be humane, to make them Christians, and thus expose them — after years of comfort and luxury — to all the hardships and privations in which the members of this sect

delighted? The female slave offered to go with them, and watch over them as a Christian. But the mother's heart would not allow her to consent to this. She insisted on leaving them with their grandmother.

Julius's approval of this arrangement removed the only serious obstacle in the way; and this satisfactorily disposed of, the remaining preparations were at once begun, by Julius and his wife, for taking the most momentous step in their lives.

CHAPTER VII.

At last all the preparations were concluded and everything finally settled, the only remaining difficulty being Julius's health — his wounds had not yet healed — which compelled him to put off for a few days, or it might be weeks, the last formal act that would sever the ties that bound him to the religion, traditions, and ways of thinking of his fathers, and introduce him to the new life he had chosen. One night he fell asleep in the same resolute mood as usual, and on awaking next morning was informed that a clever physician, who chanced to be passing through the town, had expressed a desire to see him and undertake to restore him speedily to health and strength. Julius was delighted, said he would see the physician at once, and a

few moments later was exchanging salutations with the identical stranger whom he had met and discoursed with many years before on his way to the Christians.

Having carefully examined his wounds, the doctor prescribed a decoction of certain simples which, he promised, would fortify his patient, and hasten his recovery.

"Shall I ever be able to work with my hand?" Julius inquired.

"Oh, certainly. You will be able to drive a chariot as deftly as ever you did, and to write, too, as much as you desire."

"Yes, but I mean hard work; digging, for instance?"

"Well, I confess I had not that kind of work in mind," said the physician; "because a man in your position never need take to anything of that kind."

"On the contrary, that is precisely the kind of labor I shall be engaged in," replied Julius. And he thereupon told the stranger how he had scrupulously acted upon his advice and tasted life, had found all its promises deceitful, and

now, full of disappointment and dissatisfaction, was firmly resolved to carry out the intention he had conceived several years before, and join the Christian community.

"Well, they must have spun a very pretty web of charming falsehood for you, have enticed you into it, and hold you, now, nicely fastened up, if you, a man occupying such a high social position, with onerous and honorable duties and responsibilities,— especially in respect to your children,— are unable to penetrate the mask and discern their errors."

"Will you kindly read this?" said Julius, significantly, in reply, handing him the Greek manuscript which he had himself pondered over some days before with such wonderful results.

The physician took the scroll; glanced at it.

"I know this fraud," he exclaimed; "the only thing that surprises me is that a man of your intellect should fall into such a snare."

"I confess I do not understand you. What snare?"

"The pith and essence of the whole thing lies in one's conception of human life: and here

are these sophists and rebels against men and gods declaring that one way of life leads to happiness, and defining it as a kind of life organized in such a way that all men are to be happy; that there are to be no wars, nor executions, nor poverty, nor immorality, nor quarrels, nor malice. And then they go on to affirm that all these conditions will be realized as soon as people carry out Christ's commandments not to quarrel, not to commit fornication, not to swear, not to do violence, not to egg on nation to rise up against nation. But the fact is that they are deceiving people by taking the end for the means. The real aim and object is to keep from quarrelling, from swearing, from dissoluteness, etc.; and the only way of attaining it is by employing the means afforded by social life. Their way of presenting the facts is about as natural and logical as would be that of a teacher of archery who should say to his pupil: 'You will easily hit the very centre of the target, if you only let your arrow fly along in a perfectly straight line from the bow to the point to be hit.' The question is how to make the arrow

fly along this perfectly straight line — that is the problem, and to re-state it is not to solve. In archery the question is solved by fulfilling many conditions, such as having your bowstring tight, your bow elastic, your arrow straight, etc. It is even so with life. The best kind of life — which will exclude or greatly lessen quarrels, dissoluteness, murders — is also arrived at by having your bowstring tight — viz., wise rulers; your bow elastic — viz., power invested in the authorities; and your arrow straight — viz., the laws just and impartial. They, under pretext of organizing the best way of living, demolish all that has heretofore bettered, and is still calculated to better, human life. They acknowledge no rulers, nor authority, nor laws."

"But they maintain that without rulers, authority and laws, human existence will be in all respects better, if only people will fulfil the law of Christ."

"Yes; but what guarantee have we that people will fulfil his law? Absolutely none. They say: 'You have tried life with authorities and laws, and it has never been anything

but a failure. Try it now without authorities and laws, and you will soon see that it will become perfect. You have no right to deny this, not having put it to the test of experience.' But here the sophistry of these impious men is manifest. Speaking in this tone, are they a whit more logical than the agriculturist who should say: 'You sow the seed in the ground and then cover it up with earth, and yet the harvest crop falls far below what you would wish it to be. But my advice to you is, sow in the sea, and the results will be far more satisfactory. And do not attempt to meet this thesis with a bare denial — you have no right to do so, never having put it to the test of experience.'"

"Yes; there is much truth in what you say," answered Julius, beginning to falter in his resolution.

"Nor is this all," continued the physician. "Let us suppose that what is absurd — nay, impossible — has come to pass, that the fundamental beliefs and practices of Christianity can, in some mysterious manner, be communicated

to mankind, by means, say, of medicinal drops, and that suddenly all men take to fulfilling Christ's teachings — loving God and their neighbor, and obeying the commandments. Even then, I submit, the way of life laid down in their books will not stand fair criticism. There will be no life; life will cease to exist. Their teacher was an unmarried tramp; his followers will be — according to our supposition — what their master was; and so will the whole world. Those who are now alive will live on, but their children will not, or certainly not more than one in ten of the children who would otherwise grow up to manhood. According to their own doctrine, the children should and would be all equal, parents not preferring their own children to those of perfect strangers. Now, how, I ask, will these children be attended to, cared for, brought up and shielded from all the dangers with which life bristles, when we see now that all the passionate love which nature has planted in the mother's breast for her own offspring is scarcely enough to preserve children from ruin

and death? If children fall like grass before the scythe now that the conditions are most favorable to them, what will it be when the only feeling left to mothers will be equal pity for all children? Whose child will a woman bring up and educate? Who will sit up wakeful night after night with the sick, foul-smelling child, if not the mother who gave it life? Nature provided the child with a shield — motherly love; they tear it away, and put nothing in its place. Who is to teach the child, to train it, to penetrate to its very soul, and from that centre shape and mould it, if not its own father? Who will ward off dangers and suffering from it? All this is taken away by Christianity: nay, life itself — I mean the perpetuation of the human race — is taken away."

"There, too, you are right," interrupted Julius, who was carried away by the physician's clear, business-like, eloquent way of putting things.

"No, my friend, turn away from all these wild ravings, and live in accordance with the

dictates of reason; especially at the present time, when such noble, momentous, and urgent duties still weigh upon you. To fulfil them is a point of honor. You have lived to enter upon this your second period of doubt, and now, if you will only march onwards, all doubt will vanish. Your first and most urgent obligation is to undertake the education of your children, whom you have hitherto sadly neglected. Your duty towards them consists in making them worthy servants of the commonwealth. The commonwealth has conferred upon you everything you possess, and now it is your duty, in return, to give the commonwealth worthy servants in the persons of your children. Another obligation you are under is to serve society. Failure has embittered and disappointed you; this, however, is but a passing accident. Nothing worth having is ever acquired except at the cost of efforts and struggles; and it is only the hard-won victory that brings the joy of triumph. Leave it to your wife to amuse herself with the idle gossip of Christian writers; it is your duty to be a

man, and to make men of your children. Begin this work with the consciousness that you are performing your duty, and all your doubts will vanish into air, for they are but the symptoms and results of your morbid state. Discharge your obligations to the commonwealth by faithfully serving it, and by training up your children to serve it; make them independent, self-sacrificing, fit and worthy to take your place, and having done so, test, if you will, the life that so attracts you; but until then you have no right to abandon your present work, and if you did forsake it you would find nothing but disappointment and suffering."

CHAPTER VIII.

Whether it was the effect of the medicine, or of the conversation and advice, it is impossible to say, but Julius was soon restored to his normal state of health again, and all his former views of Christianity seemed to him but as the ravings of a madman.

The physician after a short sojourn left the city, and a few days after his departure Julius was on his feet again, busy following his advice, and inaugurating the new life he had outlined for him. He engaged a teacher for his children, but he reserved to himself the chief control of their education; all the rest of his time he employed in the conduct of public affairs, in which his success was marked and

rapid, and in a very short space of time he had acquired immense influence in the city.

In this way a twelvemonth passed away, during which he was never once troubled by thoughts about the Christians. At the end of the year he was appointed to judge the Christians in their town, which was not very far off.

A representative of the Roman emperor had come to Cilicia for the purpose of stamping out Christianity. Julius had heard of the measures put in force against the Christians, but, not supposing that they concerned the community in which Pamphilius lived, he never thought of his friend in connection with the matter. One day, as he was walking across the public square on his way to his tribunal, a shabbily dressed old man — to all appearance a stranger — came hurrying up towards him. This badly dressed man was Pamphilius. Pamphilius drew near and accosted him. "How are you, friend," he said. "I have a very urgent and important request to make — but I do not know whether, during this cruel persecution of the Christians, you care to look upon

me as a friend, or whether you are afraid to lose your position by having dealings with me."

"I fear no man," answered Julius; "and that you may have no misgivings on the subject, I will ask you to come along with me to my house. I will even let my work stand over, in order to have a chat with you, and to render you any service in my power. Come along. Whose child is that?"

"That's my son."

"But I need not have inquired. I recognize your traits in his face. I also recognize those blue eyes of his, and deem it superfluous to ask who is your wife. It cannot be any one but that beautiful girl whom I saw with you in Tarsus many years ago. Those are her eyes."

"Your guess is correct," answered Pamphilius. "Shortly after you and I last parted she became my wife."

The two friends entered Julius's house. Julius called his wife, confided the boy to her care, then ushered in Pamphilius to his own luxurious apartment, which was at a considerable distance from the other rooms, remarking

as they entered: "Here you can talk to your heart's content, and nobody will ever be the wiser. You are out of the hearing of all the world."

"Oh, I am not afraid of being overheard — quite the reverse. Indeed, the request I have to make is not that the Christians who have been arrested and marked out for death should not be executed, but that permission should be accorded them to make a public profession of their faith."

And Pamphilius narrated how the Christians who had been deprived of their liberty by the authorities had sent word of their arrest from the prisons in which they were confined to the members of their community. Then Cyril the elder, aware of Pamphilius's friendly relations with Julius, had commissioned him to come and make that request for the condemned Christians.

The prisoners did not ask to be pardoned. They held it to be their mission in life to bear witness to the truth of Christ's teachings. This testimony they could give by a long eighty

years' life, or by undergoing the pains of a cruel death. It was quite immaterial to them in which of these two ways they fulfilled the main object of their existence; physical death, which in the long run was inevitable, had no terrors for them, and it was quite as welcome now as fifty years hence; but they were vehemently desirous that their lives should prove beneficial to their fellows, and, to make sure of this, deputed Pamphilius to ask as a boon that their trial and execution should take place in the presence of the people.

Julius was astonished at Pamphilius's strange request, but promised to do everything that depended on him to have it granted.

"I have promised you my mediation," Julius said, "from a feeling of friendship for yourself, and from a peculiar disposition to kindliness which you always succeed in awakening within me. At the same time, I feel I ought to tell you that I consider your tenets in the last degree extravagant and mischievous. I have a right, I think, to form a judgment upon the subject, seeing that I speak from experience.

It is not long since I myself, in a moment of utter dejection, brought on by disappointment and disease, shared your views, and shared them so fully that I was again on the point of giving up everything and joining your sect. I know the pivot on which all your errors turn, the corner-stone of the whole system, for I have myself built upon it; it is self-love, faint-heartedness, and debility caused by disease. Yes; Christianity is a creed for women, not for men."

"But why so?"

"Because, although, on the one hand, you acknowledge that discord and the numerous forms of violence it engenders are inborn in human nature, you refuse, on the other hand, to hold aloof from these and their fruits, and to abandon them to others who are of a different way of thinking; and so, without contributing your share to the sum of human efforts, you are not above reaping all the advantages you can have from the organization of the world, which you know to be founded on violence. Is this fair? The world has always

existed through and by means of its rulers. They take upon themselves the work and the responsibility of governing; they protect us from foreign and domestic enemies. We subjects, in return for this, pay our rulers deference and homage, obey their commands, and, when needful, assist them to serve the state.

"But you Christians are not content to put your shoulders to the wheel, and work for the commonwealth as others do; you must rise gradually higher and higher in the obligation to treat others as your superiors, until at last you are able to consider yourselves Cæsar's equals. Even this does not satisfy you. No; you protest against tributes and taxes, slavery, the law courts, executions and wars—in a word, against all those institutions which bind men together and keep them united. If people were to give ear to your doctrines, society would very quickly fall to pieces and its members return to their pristine savagery. Living in a state, you preach the destruction of the state; you, whose very existence is dependent on that of the state. If the state did not exist,

you and your brethren would never have been heard of; we should all be slaves of the Scyths or of the first savage tribes who discovered us.

"You are like a tumor which destroys the body, and yet lives solely upon the body. The living individual body struggles with and annihilates the tumor, and we act, and cannot but act, in precisely the same way towards you. Hence, in spite of my promise to assist you to realize your wishes, I look upon your tenets as exceedingly pernicious and vile. Vile, because I hold that to gnaw the breast that nourishes you is neither honorable nor just; and this is what you are doing who are willing to profit by the advantages offered by the commonwealth, and yet not only refuse to move a a finger in support of the organization by which it exists, but actually endeavor to pull it to pieces."

"There would be much truth in what you advance," replied Pamphilius, "if our life corresponded to your description of it. But you have no actual experience of the life we lead, and your notions of it are false and misleading.

"The means of livelihood which we make use of are readily obtainable without recurring to any form of violence whatever; and man is so constituted that, so long as he is in normal health, he can obtain by the work of his hands more than he requires for the support of his life. Living together in common, we are able by the work of our hands to maintain our children and old folks, our sick and infirm.

"You assert that your rulers protect men from their foreign and domestic enemies. But we love our enemies — and consequently have none.

"You contend that we Christians arouse in the breast of the slave a desire to be a Cæsar. In truth, we do to the contrary: by word and deed we preach patient humility and work — work of what is considered the lowest kind — the work of the common day-laborer.

"About affairs of state we know nothing, understand nothing. We know but one thing in that sphere, but that we know thoroughly, beyond the possibility of doubt; namely, that our happiness lies where the happiness of other

people is to be found, and it is there that we always seek it. The happiness of all men consists in their union; and their union must be brought about, not by violence, but by love. The violence of a highwayman towards a wayfarer is to our thinking neither more nor less abominable than the violence employed by troops against their prisoner, or by the judge against the condemned culprit; and it is impossible that we should deliberately consent to have hand or part in one or the other. Violence is reflected in us; but our share in it consists, not in actively applying it against others, but in submitting to it without protest."

"Yes," interrupted Julius; "but you only seem to be martyrs, and to be ever eager to lay down your lives for the truth. In reality, truth is not on your side; you are proud madcaps engaged in sapping the foundations of social life. In words you preach love, but it needs no very searching analysis of the results that flow from that love of yours to discover that it should be called by a very different name; for the results in question are savagery, retrogression

to the primitive state of nature, murders, robbery, violence of all kinds, etc., which according to your doctrines must not be opposed or checked in any way."

"No; that is not so," rejoined Pamphilius. "And if you will only consider carefully and impartially what results from our teaching and our living, you will see, without my pointing it out, not only that murders, violence, and robbery do not flow from them, but that, on the contrary, crimes of this nature cannot be successfully rooted out otherwise than by employing the means we advocate. Murder, robbery, and every kind of evil existed in the world long before Christianity appeared there, and people grappled with them in vain, employing those means the efficacy of which we deny. These expedients, which all consist in meeting violence with violence, do not, cannot, check crime; but they provoke it, by arousing in individuals feelings of anger and bitterness.

"Just look at the mighty Roman Empire. In no other country have such pains been taken to apply the laws as in Rome. The study and

delicate adjustment of the legislation to the varying wants of the people have been raised to the rank of a special science there. The laws are taught in the schools, discussed in the senate, reformed and administered by the most gifted citizens. Legal justice is regarded as one of the noblest human achievements, and the office of judge is held in the highest esteem. And yet it is known to every one that there is no city existing at the present moment, throughout the length and breadth of God's earth, which has sunk so deeply in the ooze of debauchery and crime as Rome. Call to mind the history of Rome, and you will be struck by the fact that the Roman people were distinguished by many virtues in remoter times, notwithstanding the circumstance that the laws then were neither so numerous, nor drawn up with such a careful eye to the end in view, as at the present time. Now-a-days, side by side with the study, adjustment, and application of the laws, we observe a steady deterioration in the morals of the Roman people; the number of crimes continues to increase, and the species of

criminal offences grow more various and artificial every day.

"To grapple successfully with crimes, or with any description of evil, is possible only by employing the means which Christianity places within our reach — viz., love; the Pagan weapons of vengeance, punishment, violence, are absurdly inefficacious. I am sure that you yourself would like to see people refraining from doing evil, not from fear of punishment, but from a lack of desire to do what is wrong. Surely you would not wish mankind to resemble the wretches confined in prison, who abstain from committing crime only because they are continually watched and kept in order by their gaolers. All the preventive and remedial laws and punishments in the world will not root out people's propensities to do wrong and put a desire to do right in its place. The result can be accomplished only when you deal with the root of the evil which you seek to eradicate; and the root lies inside the individual. And to do this is our aim and object, whereas you confine yourself to the outward

manifestations of the evil. You can never hope to reach its source, because you do not seek for it, you do not know where it is hidden.

"The most common and prevalent crimes, such as murder, robbery, theft, fraud, have their source in men's desire to increase their stock of this world's goods, or simply to obtain the bare necessities of life, which for one reason or another they cannot procure in any other way. Some of these crimes are punished by the law, although those which are the most complicated and wide reaching in their effects are committed under the protecting wing of this same law; such, for instance, as huge commercial frauds, and the endless ways of stripping the poor of their possessions which are constantly practised by the rich. Those crimes which are punished by the law are to a certain extent checked or rather made more difficult, and the criminals are driven, by fear of incurring the penalty, to set to work more prudently and cunningly than would be otherwise necessary, devising new species of crime which the law cannot punish. By practising the teachings of the Christian

religion a man keeps clear of all such crimes as arise either from the scramble for riches or from the unequal distribution of wealth, great quantities of which are accumulated in the hands of a few. We take away all motive to crime, to robbery, and murder, solely by refusing to take for ourselves more than what is strictly indispensable for the support of life, and by giving up to others all our free labor; thus it is that we never tempt others by the sight of accumulated wealth, for we rarely possess more than is absolutely necessary for our day's support. Hence, if a man who is driven to despair by the pains of hunger, and is ready to commit a crime in order to procure a crust of bread, comes to us, he will find what he is in search of, without having recourse to crime or violence, inasmuch as we live for the purpose of sharing our last morsel of food, our last shred of clothes, with those who are suffering from hunger and cold. And the result is that one class of criminals avoids us altogether, while the others come over to us, find salvation, abandon their criminal life, and little

by little become useful workers, toiling like the others for the common good of all mankind.

"Another category of crime consists of those offences which are provoked by the play of unbridled passions; of vengeance, for instance, jealousy, carnal love, anger, hatred. Criminal acts of this species are never prevented by laws. The individual about to commit them is in a state of animal irresponsibility, — of perfect freedom from all moral restraints; and thus blinded and swayed by his passion, he is utterly incapable of gauging the tendency, or weighing the results, of his actions. An obstacle only serves to fan the flame of his passion. Laws, therefore, are perfectly useless as instruments for suppressing such crimes. Our method of tackling them is efficacious. We believe that man will never attain the satisfaction and the aim of life by ministering to his passions, or anywhere except within himself in his own soul. We endeavor, therefore, to tame and curb our passions by a life of labor and of love, developing thereby, in a corresponding degree, the force and suppleness of the spiritual

principle within us; and in proportion as our number becomes larger, and our faith penetrates farther and deeper among men, will the number of such crimes become less.

"Finally, there is still another class of crimes which have their root in a sincere desire to help one's fellow-creatures. The desire to alleviate the sufferings of an entire people, for instance, impels some men — conspirators they are called — to kill a tyrant, in the belief that they are thereby benefiting the majority. The source of such crimes is a mistaken conviction that evil may be perpetrated, in order that good may follow. Now crimes of this description are not only not prevented, or their number lessened, by the promulgation and application of legal pains and penalties, but they are positively provoked thereby. The persons who commit offences of this kind, although grievously mistaken in their hopes and beliefs, are impelled to act as they do by a noble motive — a desire to do good to others. Most of these men, if sincere, are ready to lay down all they have and are for the attainment of their end,

they quail before no dangers or difficulties. Hence, years of punishment are powerless to restrain or cause them to hesitate. On the contrary, dangers infuse new life and spirit into them; their sufferings raise them to the dignity of martyrs, earn for them the sympathy of most men, and stimulate many others to go and do likewise. This is confirmed by the history of any, of every, people.

"We Christians believe that the evil will not cease entirely until all men get to understand the gravity of the misfortunes it causes to themselves and to others. We also know that a brotherhood cannot be founded until every one of us is himself a brother; that a brotherhood cannot be organized without brethren. Therefore, we Christians, although we clearly perceive the error of such conspirators, cannot but appreciate their sincerity and self-denial, and we draw near them, and meet them on the common ground of the positive good which it must be admitted they possess.

"In us they recognize, not foes, but people quite as sincere and as eagerly bent on doing

good as they are themselves; and many of them come over to us, after having acquired the conviction that a quiet life of toil and unceasing solicitude for the welfare of others is incomparably more beneficial to mankind and a more difficult achievement than their momentary feats of prowess, which are stained by the blood of human life needlessly sacrificed. And those conspirators who in this belief join our body are always found among the most active and vigorous members of our community, both in body and in spirit.

"You have now data enough, Julius, to decide for yourself who it is that grapples more successfully with all kinds of crime and contributes more efficaciously to suppress it, — we Christians who preach and demonstrate the joy and light of a spiritual life, from which no evil can arise, we whose aims are example and love, or your rulers and judges who pass sentences according to the letter of a dead law, and finish by rescuing their victims, or lashing them into fury and driving them to the uttermost extreme of hatred."

"As long as I keep listening to you," replied Julius, "I certainly seem to get the impression that your point of view is the correct one. But will you explain to me, Pamphilius, how it is that people persecute you, hunt you down, kill you? How, in a word, your doctrine of love can beget such discord and strife?"

"The source of this seeming anomaly is not in us, it is outside us. I alluded, a few moments ago, to a class of crimes which are condemned as crimes both by the state and by us. These crimes consist of a form of violence which transgresses the laws established for the time being in any state. But, besides and above these laws, people recognize other laws which are eternal, common to all mankind, engraved in the hearts of all human beings. We Christians obey these divine universal laws, and discern in the words and life of our Teacher their fittest, clearest, and fullest expression. This is why we have come to condemn as a crime every form of violence which transgresses any one of Christ's command-

ments, in all of which we see the expression of God's law. We admit that, in order to remove, when possible, all pretext for the manifestation of ill-will against us, we are bound to observe the civil laws of the country in which we reside. But higher than all else we place the law of God, which guides our conscience and our reason; and we can therefore obey only such laws of the state as are not opposed to those of God. Let Cæsar have what is his of right; but to God we must render all that is God's. The crimes which we are intent on avoiding and suppressing are not merely transgressions against the laws of the states in which we were born and must live, but first and foremost every species of violation of God's will, which is a law common to the whole human race. Hence, our struggle with crime is more comprehensive and more profound than yours, which is carried on by the state.

Now, this recognition by us of God's will as the highest law shocks and incenses those who give the first place to a private law — to the

legislative measures of a state, for instance, or — as is often the case — who raise a custom of their class to the dignity of a law. These individuals, unwilling or unable to become men in the true sense of the word, in the sense in which Christ said that truth would make us free men, are satisfied with the position of subjects of this or that state, or members of this or that society, and they are naturally animated by feelings of enmity for those who see and proclaim that man has a much higher destiny, a far nobler mission. Unable to discern, reluctant to admit this higher destiny for themselves, they refuse to acknowledge it for others. Concerning them Christ said: 'Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in you hindered.' They are the originators of that persecution against us which puzzles you.

"We ourselves entertain feelings of enmity for no man — not even for those who thus pursue and persecute us, and our manner of life inflicts no harm or loss on any one. If

people are incensed against us, if they foster feelings of hatred towards us, the only possible reason is that our life is a constant rebuke to them, a condemnation of their conduct, founded as it is upon violence. To put an end to that enmity, the cause of which does not lie with us, is beyond our power, for we cannot cease to comprehend the truth which we have already comprehended; we cannot live against our conscience and our reason. Concerning that same hostility to us, which our faith arouses in others, our Teacher said: 'Think not that I am come to send peace: I came not to send peace but a sword.' Christ felt the effects of this hatred on His own person, and he warned us, His followers, many times, that we too should experience it. 'Me,' He said once, 'the world hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you; and the time will come when he who kills you will think that he has

served God.' But, strengthened by Christ's example, we, like Him, do not fear those who kill the body, for they can do nothing more. Illumined by the rays of truth, we live in its light, and our life knows not death. Physical suffering and death no man can escape A time will come when our executioners will also suffer in body and die, and it is horrible to think how the unfortunate, helpless creatures will be tortured at the sight of death, which will strip them of all that they acquired at the cost of such arduous labor continued throughout their lifetime. Thanks to God that we are guaranteed against the most frightful of all suffering; for the happiness for which we yearn consists not in immunity from bodily pain and death, but in the preservation and development of equanimity in all the vicissitudes of life, in the consoling conviction that whatever happens to us independently of our own will is unavoidable, and for our ultimate good; and, above all, in the knowledge that we are true to our conscience and our reason — these noble lights bestowed upon man by the

Source of Truth. And thus we suffer nothing from those who hate and persecute us. It is not we, but they, who smart from the stings of that enmity, that hatred, which, like a snake in their bosom, they nurture in their hearts. 'And this is their condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.' There is nothing to perplex or trouble us in all that; for truth will do its work. The sheep hear the voice of their shepherd, and they follow him, because they know his voice.

"And Christ's flock will not perish, but will grow and thrive, attracting ever new sheep from all parts of the world; for the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth."

CHAPTER IX.

While he was still speaking, Pamphilius's little son rushed into the apartment and hugged and clasped his father. In spite of all the coaxing and caresses, he had run away from Julius's wife, and now took shelter in his father's embrace.

Pamphilius sighed, fondled his boy, rose up and was about to depart, but Julius detained him, requested him to continue the conversation and stay for dinner.

"I am astonished, I confess," said Julius, "that you should be married and have children. It is a mystery to me how you Christians can bring up your children, in spite of the absence of property; how Christian mothers can attain peace of mind, knowing, as they do, how pre-

carious is the future of their offspring, and how powerless they are to put their children beyond the reach of want."

"In what respect are our children worse off than yours?" asked Pamphilius.

"In this respect, that they have no slaves to look after them, no property of any kind to fall back upon. My wife is very favorably disposed to Christianity, in fact at one time she was firmly bent on abandoning her present life and becoming a Christian. That was several years ago — I, too, was then resolved to accompany her. But what frightened her more than anything else was the precariousness of the position of Christian children, the want to which they are exposed. And I must say I could not but agree with her. That was when I was ill and confined to my bed. I was then thoroughly disgusted with the life I had been leading, and had taken the resolution to forsake it once for all, and join your community. But the apprehensions of my wife, on the one hand, and the arguments of the physician who attended me and brought me

round, on the other hand, impressed me with the conviction that the life of a Christian — at least, as you understand and practise it — is possible and beneficial only when those who embrace it are unmarried; but that persons with families, mothers with children, are utterly unsuited for it and should never think of trying it. Furthermore, that the upshot of the life you approve and lead will be the cessation of all human life; that is to say, the extinction of the race. This is a fact which there is no getting over. And, under such circumstances, I was, I confess, rather surprised to see you appear with a child by your side."

"And not one only, I may add; for I left at home a child in arms and a girl of three years."

"Well, will you explain how it is done? Do what I will, I positively cannot understand it. A few years ago I was, as I remarked, on the point of forswearing my worldly life, and embracing Christianity. But I was the father of children, and I felt that, however distasteful the fact might be to me, it still remained a

fact that I had no right to sacrifice my children; and, recognizing this, I stayed on, leading my old life, for their sakes, in order to bring them up in the same conditions as those in which I was educated myself."

"It is very odd," replied Pamphilius, "that you should reason so. From the same facts we draw opposite conclusions. We say: If grown-up people live in a worldly manner, this is to a certain extent excusable, because they are spoiled already. But children? That is horrible! To live with them in the world and expose them continually to its temptations and dangers? 'Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.'

"These are the words of our Master, and I make use of them for that reason, and because they are the expression of the truth, and not merely for the purpose of objecting; for it is really a fact that the necessity of living as we live results mainly from the circumstance that there are children in our midst, tender beings

of whom it has been said: 'Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'"

"But how can a Christian family contrive to get along without definite means of subsistence?"

"Means of subsistence, according to our belief, are of one kind, and only one kind: work, for the benefit of others, inspired by love. Your means of livelihood, on the contrary, is violence, which vanishes as wealth vanishes, and then nothing remains but the labor and love of men. We start with the idea that we should hold fast by that which is the foundation, the basis of everything else, increasing it when possible. And when this is done, the family lives and even thrives.

"No," continued Pamphilius; "if I entertained any doubts about the truth of Christ's teachings, and if I hesitated about putting them in practice, my doubts and hesitations would instantly disappear the moment I pictured to myself the sad fate of the children who are brought up in Paganism, amid the

surroundings and associations in which you grew up, and are now educating your children. No matter what strenuous efforts we, a small band of individuals, make to render life comfortable and pleasant, by means of palaces, slaves, and the imported products of foreign climes, the lives of the great mass of the people will remain what they were, what they must be. The only provision for these lives remains the love of mankind and earnest toil. We are desirous of freeing ourselves and our friends from the pressure of these conditions, and we get other people to work for us, not voluntarily, out of love, but by employing violence; and, strange to say, the better we seem to provide for ourselves, the more we are depriving ourselves of the only true, natural, and enduring provision — love. The greater the power of the ruler, the less he is loved.

"The same thing holds good of that other provision — work. The more a man shirks work and accustoms himself to luxury, the less capable he becomes of working, and the more he consequently deprives himself of the true and

eternal provision. And these conditions in which people place their children, they term making provision for them! To test my statement, take your son and mine, and send them to find a road, to transmit an order, or to transact any important business, and note which of them acquits himself more satisfactorily; or propose to confide them to a master to be educated, and see which of them will be the more willingly received. No; never again utter those terrible words, that a Christian life is possible only for those who are childless. On the contrary, one might rather say that to lead the life of a Pagan is excusable only in those who are without children. But woe to him who offendeth any of these little ones."

Julius remained silent.

"Yes," he said, after a considerable pause; "it may be that you are right. But their education is already begun, the very best of masters are teaching them. Let them learn all that we know; that can surely do them no harm. There is plenty of time yet, both for them and for me. They will be at liberty to

embrace your faith when they are in the flower of their age and in the full enjoyment of all their faculties — if they feel so disposed. As for me, I can do so when I have provided for my children, set them standing on their own feet, so to say, and have thus become free."

"When you have known the truth you will be free," answered Pamphilius. "Christ confers perfect liberty at once; the world's teachings will never bestow it. Good-by!"

And Pamphilius, with his son, departed.

The trial of the prisoners took place in the presence of the people, and Julius saw Pamphilius, and noticed how he, together with the other Christians, assisted in removing the bodies of the martyrs. He noticed that; but fear of offending his superiors kept him from approaching his friend, or inviting him to his house.

CHAPTER X.

Twelve years more passed away. Julius's wife died. His time was filled up with the cares and worry inseparable from public life, and in the pursuit of power, which now became his for passing moment, and now slipped away from his grasp. His wealth was immense and he still went on increasing it.

His sons had meanwhile grown to man's estate and were leading — especially the second one — a life of luxury and extravagance. This young man had made considerable holes in the vessel in which his father's riches were stored up, and they leaked out with greater rapidity than they were poured in. A struggle was carried on between Julius and his sons which was in all respects identical with that which had

been waged years before by himself and his father. It was characterized by the same traits: bitterness, hatred, jealousy. Moreover, about this time a new viceroy had been appointed, who deprived Julius of all the marks of imperial favor. Julius was forsaken, in consequence, by his former flatterers, and was now in expectation of being banished. He repaired to Rome in order to offer explanations, with a view to recovering his lost position, but he was not received and was commanded to return home.

On his arrival in Tarsus he found his son banqueting with several dissolute young men in his house. In Cilicia a rumor had been circulated to the effect that Julius was dead, and his son was joyfully celebrating his father's death. At sight of this Julius, losing all control over his passion, felled his son to the ground, left him for dead, and withdrew to the apartment of his late wife.

In his wife's room he found a scroll containing the Gospel, and read therein the words: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Yes," exclaimed Julius to himself; "He has been long calling me. I did not believe Him, was disobedient and wicked; and the yoke I bore was heavy, the burden I carried was evil."

And for a long time Julius remained sitting with the manuscript spread out before him on his knees, meditating upon his past life, and calling to mind what Pamphilius on various occasions had told him.

At length he arose and went to his son, whom he found on his feet, and he was overjoyed to think that he had inflicted no serious harm by the blow.

Without addressing a word to his son, Julius left the house, walked into the street, and took the road that led to the Christian community.

He journeyed on the whole day; and, when evening came, he stopped at a villager's house, where he intended to pass the night. In the room into which he entered there was a man stretched out on a couch. The noise of footsteps disturbed him and he raised himself up.

Julius recognized the physician.

"No," exclaimed Julius; "never again shall

you dissuade me from carrying out my resolve. This is the third time that I am bound for the same destination, and I know that there, and there only, I shall find peace of mind."

"Where?" asked the physician.

"Among the Christians."

"Yes; you may possibly find peace of mind there, but you will certainly not be doing your duty. You lack fortitude, my friend; misfortunes subdue you. True philosophers never act thus. Disasters and reverses are but the fire that tries the gold. You have passed through the crucible; and now that your services, which might prove inestimable, are most urgently needed, you are sneaking away. It is now that you should test others and yourself. You have acquired true wisdom, and it is your duty to make use of it for the good of the commonwealth. What would become of the citizens and the state, if those who have obtained a thorough knowledge of men, their passions, motives, and the conditions of their life, instead of giving the benefit of their knowledge and experience to the state, were to bury them out

of sight and seek repose and tranquillity for themselves? Your wisdom has been gained in society, and it is your duty to allow society to reap the benefits of it."

"But I possess no wisdom. I am a bundle of errors. True, they are ancient, but then antiquity does not transform errors into wisdom; age and putridity, no matter what proportions they may reach, never change water into wine."

And having said this, Julius caught up his mantle, quitted the room and the house, and without resting anywhere continued his journey.

The next evening, as the long shadows had just deepened into darkness, he reached the town of the Christians. He received a very cordial welcome, notwithstanding that it was not known that he was the personal friend of Pamphilius, whom they all loved and revered.

At table Pamphilius perceived his friend, and, with an affable smile, ran up to him, and pressed him in his embrace.

"Here I am at last," exclaimed Julius. "Tell me what I am to do; I will obey you."

"Don't worry about that," replied Pamphilius; "let us go together." And Pamphilius led Julius into the house that was prepared for strangers and wayfarers, pointed to the couch there, and said: "You will find out yourself in what way you may be useful to others, as soon as you have looked around you and grown accustomed to our mode of life. But in order that you may make a profitable use of your present leisure, I will tell you what you might do to-morrow: in our gardens the brethren are busy gathering in the vintage; go and give them what assistance you can. You will easily find your place among them."

Julius went to the vineyards next morning. The first was a young plantation with rich clusters of grapes hanging down on every side. The young people were gathering them in, and carrying them away. All the work was portioned out among them, and Julius went from one to another, anxious to discover something to do, but he found no place for himself there.

He penetrated further, and came into a somewhat older plantation, where the crop was

considerably less. But here, too, he failed to to get an occupation: the brethren were busy working in pairs, and required no additional hands. He continued his search, however, and soon found himself in a very old vineyard. It was empty. The vinestalks were warped and crooked, and, as it seemed to Julius, wholly devoid of fruit.

"So this is what my life is," he exclaimed to himself, as he looked around. "Had I come hither at the first call, my life would have been as the fruits of the first vineyard. Had I come at the second call, it would have been like those of the older plantation; but now my life is as these useless, weakly, old vinestalks, fit only to be thrown into the fire."

And Julius was terrified at what he had done, and at the thought of the punishment that awaited him for having wantonly squandered his whole life.

And he became very sad, and said aloud: "I am now fit for nothing; there is now no work that I can do." And he did not rise up from his place, but wept bitterly over the

criminal loss of that which he knew he could never more bring back.

Suddenly he heard the voice of an old man calling out to him. "Work, dear brother," said the voice. Looking round, Julius beheld a very old man with snow-white hair, doubled up with age, whose tottering feet scarcely bore up the weight of his body. He stood beside a vine, and was gathering the rare, sweet grapes that grew here and there upon it. Julius went up to him.

"Work, dear brother," he said; "work is sweet." And he taught him how to look for the very few clusters that were still on the stalks.

Julius set to work to do as he had been told, and having found some bunches of grapes took them to the old man and put them in his basket.

And the old man said to him: "Look! In what are these bunches inferior to those they are gathering in the other plantations? 'Work while ye have the light,' said our Teacher. 'It is the will of Him that sent me that whoso-

ever seeth the Son and believeth in Him, has life everlasting and I will raise him up on the last day. For God did not send His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him. He who believes in Him will not be judged, and he who does not believe, is judged already, because he did not believe in the only-begotten Son of God. The judgment consists in this, that the light came into the world, but men loved darkness better than the light, because their deeds are evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.'

"You are disheartened and downcast, because you have not done more than you have actually accomplished. Do not grieve, my son; for we are all children of God, and his servants. We are all soldiers of His army. Do you think that He has no servants but yourself? And suppose you had devoted yourself to His ser-

vice in the vigor of your strength, do you imagine that you would have accomplished all that He requires, that you would have done for your fellow-men all that is necessary, in order to bring about His kingdom upon earth? You say that you would have accomplished twice as much as you can now perform, ten times as much, a hundred times as much. If you realized a myriad times more than all mankind combined, what would all this amount to in the work of God? To nothing. The work of God, like God Himself, has no limits, no end. God's work is within you. Approach it, and become not a workman but a son, and you will be a copartner of God who is infinite, and a sharer in His work. With God there is neither little nor great; and in life there is neither little nor great, there is only straight or crooked. Enter on the straight road in life and you will be with God, and your work will be neither great nor little, it will be God's work. Remember that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons. The world's ways, and

all that you have neglected to do, have shown you your sin. And having seen your sin, you have repented. And having repented, you have found the right road. And now that you are on the right road, go forwards with God; think no more of the past, of little and of great. All living men are equal before God. There is one God and one life."

And Julius grew calm and composed again — obtaining the peace of mind he had yearned for; and he manfully set himself to live and to work to the utmost of his power for the good of his fellow-men. And he lived thus joyfully twenty years, his soul too full to allow him to perceive the slow approach of physical death.

THE END.

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